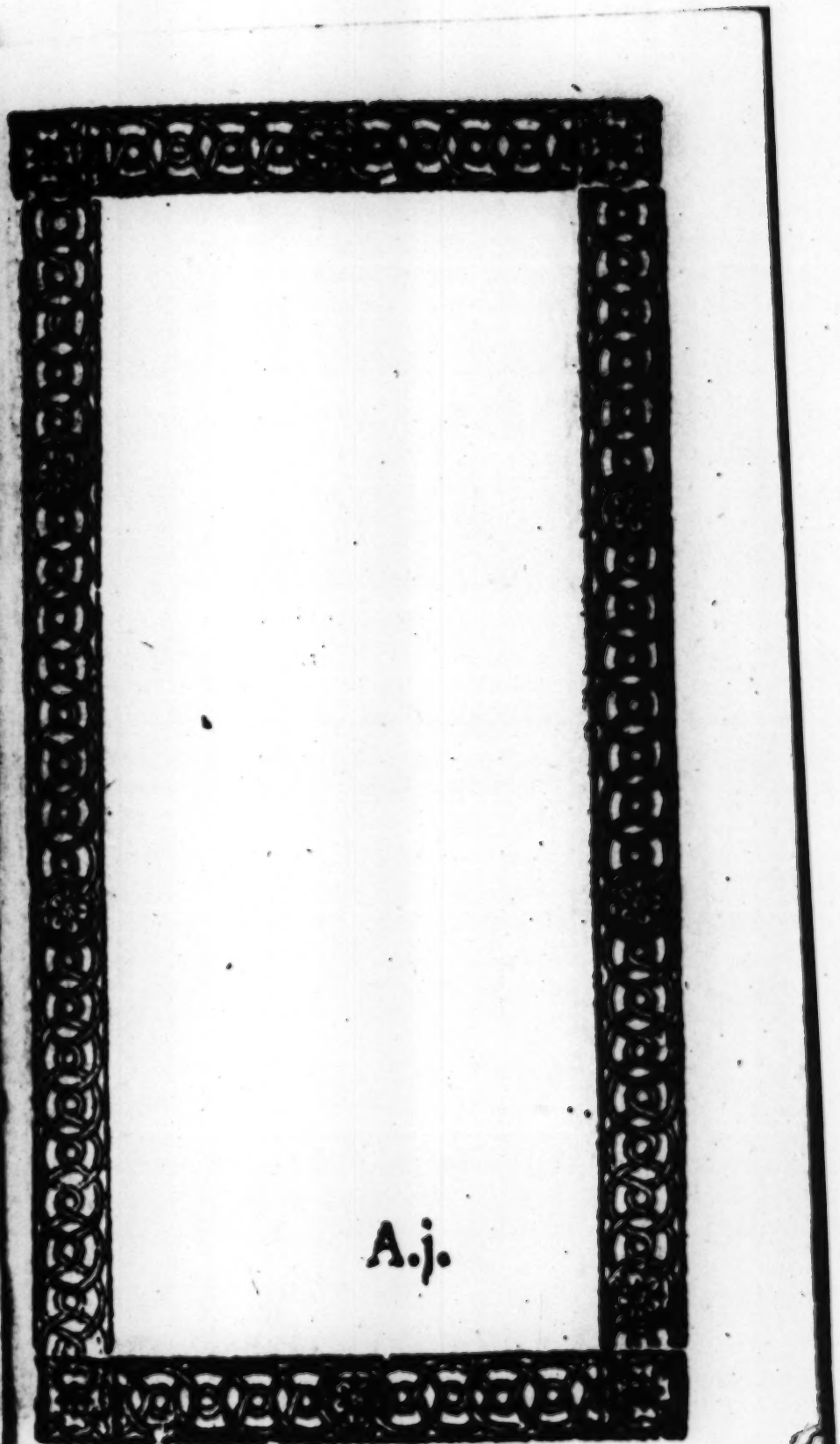
A

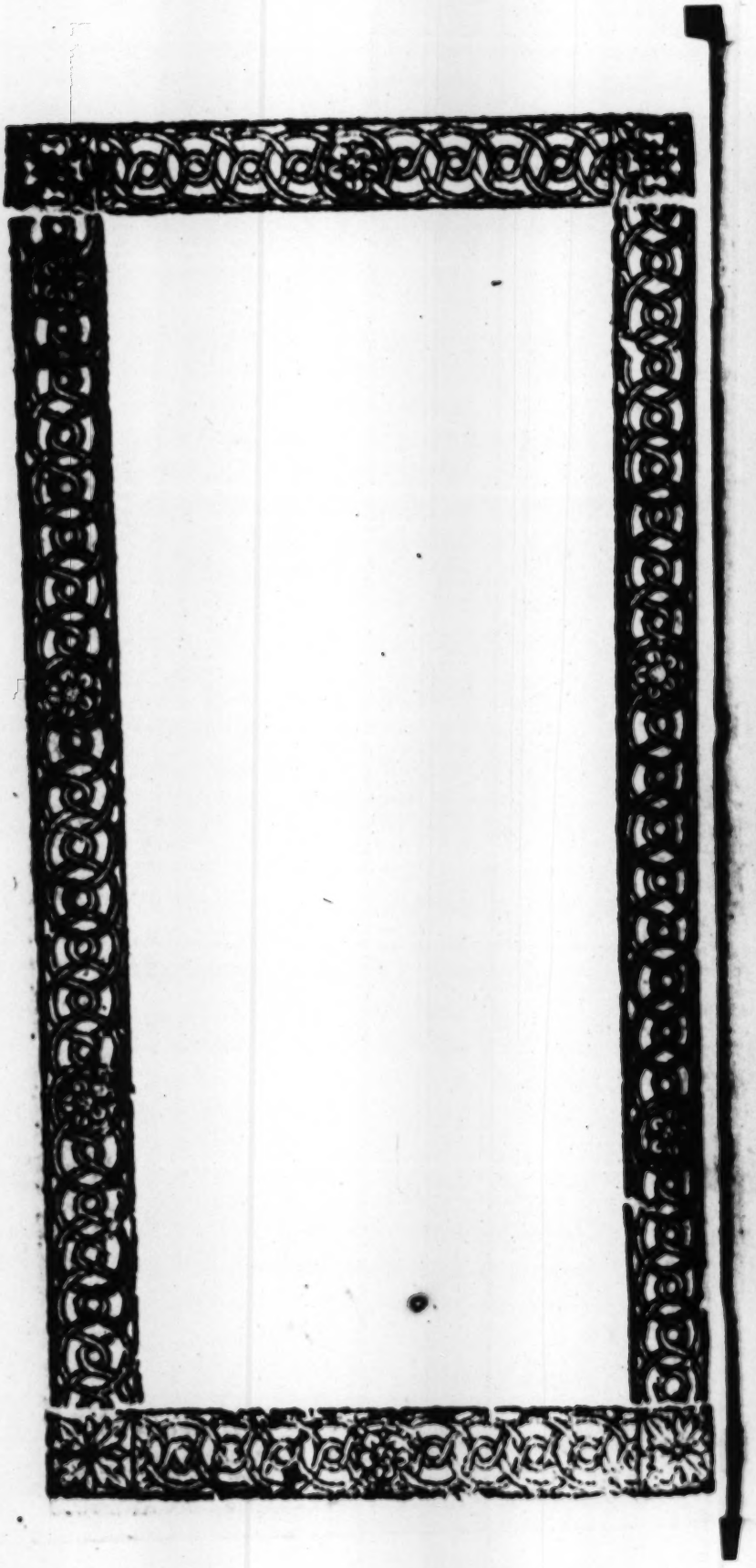
SPIRITVAL Wedding.

Wherein we are by ſimilitudes taught, how Chriſt his Bride, the faithfull ſoule, is in this life prepared & adorned, before ſhee be by Chriſt her Bridegroome ledde home to the heauenly wedding.

Writen firſt in the high Dutch tongue, and dedicated to the Empreſſe LEONORA, now newly tranſlated into Engliſh.

Imprinted at London by *Iohn Wolfe*.
1597

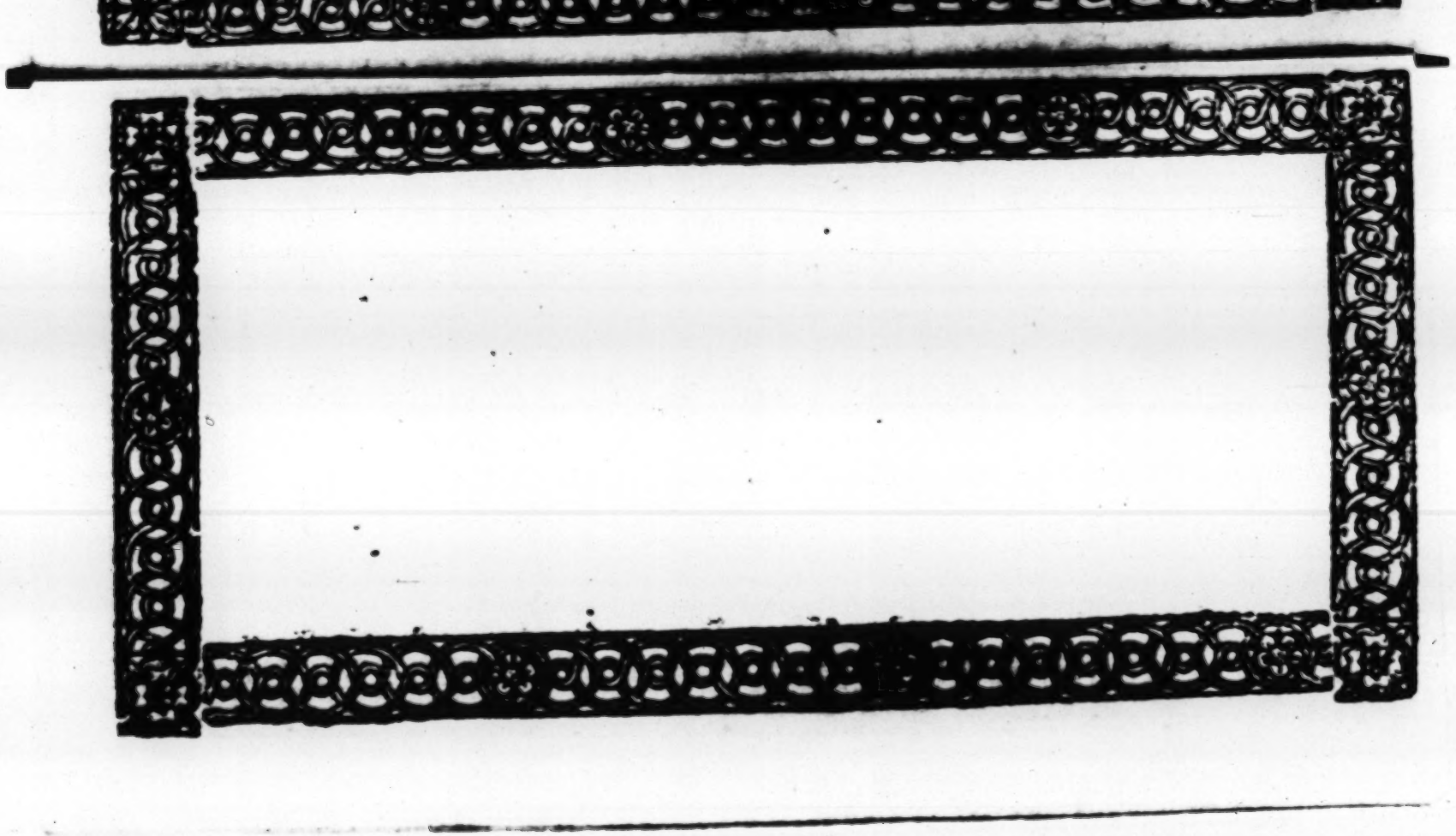




of deſeruing. So aſſuring my ſelf of your lordſhips acceptance of my good will, till occaſion of further ſeruice be offered I leaue your Lo: to Gods beſt bleſſings.

Your lordſhips in all deuotion.

John Thorius.



¶To the right reuerend father in God the lord Byſhop of Durham.

MY good lord, Receiue into your protection this heuenlie wedding, which was written in the Almaine tongue verie manie yeares paſt: and falling into my hands about fixe yeares ſince, whileſt I was in the lowe countries; the reading of it did beget ſo much good liking in mee, that I then out of hand vndertooke

this tranſlation, and ſet foorth theſe Dutch ſolemnities with Engliſh furniture. The generall fame of your woorthines, and my longing deſire euer ſince mine infancie, of making ſome proofe of my louing and honouring you for the ſame, moued me to conſecrate theſe litle labours vnto your Lordſhip: which although in their meanneſſe cannot make challenge of anie deſert, may notwithſtanding diſcouer an earneſt deſire

of

A Spirituall *Wedding.*

Of the higheſt Kings meſſage.

A Mightie King ſent his meſſengers with letters through all his countries & dominiõs to cõmaund all his officers to publiſh vnto his ſubiects, that it was his Maieſties pleaſure to haue a ſolemne feaſt celebrated for his wedding: vnto which they ſhould bring as many gentlewomen as they could: whereof each one that would vnfainedly loue him, ſhould be made a Queene and be enthroned in his kingdom, receiuing honor, ioy, and princely ornaments: but they that ſhould deſpiſe his

meſſage & forſake him, ſhould incurre his euerlaſting diſpleaſure, and neuer be made partakers of the ioy & glorie of his kingdome.

This King had a ſubtill & vntruſtie ſeruant, whom with his companions he had baniſhed out of his kingdome: wherefore he greatly hated & enuyed all thoſe that were inuited to the kings feaſt, & called to be partakers of his kingdome, endeuouring with all the power he had to hinder euery one from enioying this ſo great a happineſſe.

But the Kings truſtie ſeruants being commaunded to depart and accompliſh his cõmandements, although they ſhould thereby be endaungered to loſe both life and goods, preſently betooke themſelues to their iourney with all ſpeede & willingneſſe, being readie to ſuffer

ſuffer what harm ſoeuer might happē vnto them in this their iourney, for that they well knewe how they ſhould be recompenſed of their Lorde and maiſter with ſuch rewardes as ſhould counteruaile greater paines & loſſe then they could ſuſtaine or endure.

Hauing trauailed a while on their iourney, at length they came to a faire citie, where ſeeing ſeuen beautifull gentlewomen, they ſaid vnto them:

Wee are ſent by the higheſt King, (vnto whoſe appertaineth all honor and glorie, he being aboue all other kings & potentates whatſoeuer) to call you vnto him. Therefore you ſhall do well to harken vnto our ſayings, and wholly to conſecrate your ſelues vnto him, for that he being ſo mightie a Monarch, dayneth to make you all his eſpouſes, and to crowne

croune you euery one with a moſt glorious and princely diademe, to liue with him in his kingdome, wherein is perfit ioy and happineſſe for euer.

The kings vntruſtie ſeruant (whom I ſaid that he had baniſhed out of his kingdome) being full of ſubtiltie and deceitfulnes, counſailed the virgins after this ſort, to neglect the meſſage. Yee gentlewomen, take heede in any caſe yee harken not vnto the wordes that theſe men haue ſpoken vnto you: for whoſoeuer will follow the King, muſt take vpon him a world of care, trouble, paine, griefe and ſorrow. Yee muſt hate himſelfe and all the pleaſures of the world, and be hated of all the world, ſuffering great contempt, and liuing in all miſerie and calamitie that mortalitie is ſubiect vnto. Whereas contrarily: If yee

forſake

forſake him & follow my counſaile, yee ſhall inioy, pleaſure, honor, wealth paſtime, and all the delights of this world.

The Kings ſeruants hearing his malicious counſaile, ſaid: Thou euill counſeller, thy words ought to be deſpiſed & thy counſailes to be eſchewed as wicked and deceitfull: For thou thereby promiſeſt much good vnto them that harken vnto thee: whereas thereof commeth nothing but wretchednesse and euerlasting torment, to which both thou and athen that truſt in thee are allotted & deſtined. And therefore doeſt thou ſpeake againſt thy lords meſſage, becauſe thou enuieſt that any man ſhould enter into the kingdom, from which thou and thy complices be ſecluded. Thou ſaieſt that his ſeruice is heauie & not tollerable, where he hath ſpoken

him

him ſelfe in this manner: My yoke is pleasant and my burden is light. For whosoeuer loueth him, and obeyeth his commandemẽts, is by him enriched with neuerfading ſtore, with ſtill encreasing honour & euerlasting glorie. Wherefore to follow him and obey him is to obtain health and saluation: For his seruice is perfit freedome, his loue and cheerefull countenance, passing ioy: his peace, true securitie: his mercy, exceeding bountie: his commandement, meere Iuſtice: his faith, infallible truth: and his kingdome true comfort & present fruition of all certeintie. And therefore in the name of his power do we commaunde thee falſe and deceitfull counterfeit to depart hence.

Then departed he out of their ſight, but yet went ſecretly to the virgins to entice them

them by his ſlye and craftie ſpeeches to neglect the Kings meſſage: which ſixe of them did, but the ſeuenth forſooke Satan and turned to the euerlaſting God.

The meſſengers aſked each one of the gentlewomen a part whether they would receiue the Lord or forſake him, whereof they were to giue him an anſwere.

The anſwere of the firſt Virgin.

This meſſage truely ſeemeth verie ſtrange vnto me. For I know not him of whom you ſpeake vnto me, and therefore I cannot thinke that either he ſhould beare me ſo good will, or

if

if I should accept of his offer, proue so kinde, louing and comfortable vnto me as by you he promiseth. And so to be plaine with you, I meane not to goe with you, for I will not be maried vnto a stranger whome I know not.

Whereupon the messengers replyed: The King shall haue great occasion of wrath against you for this aunswer: and will despise you for this excuse. For should he be vnknowen vnto you, whome the whole worlde acknowledgeth to bee cheefe Lorde and gouernour of all that is either in heauen or earth, and whose name, honor, glorie and royaltie ouer al creatures, is spread euen from the East to the West. Ah simple soule, wilt not thou know him whose holy name is taught & preached in euery land, and in euery tongue?

The

of bodie and ſoule. And yet notwithſtanding yee fooliſh women ſaie that you know not this ſtone which hath beene ſo often tryed and proued, that no man may any more doubt thereof.

By theſe [illegible] women are foure ſorts of people decyphered vnto vs. The firſt will not beleeue. The ſecond, by reaſon of their idlenes and laſines will take no paines to ſerue God & line according to his holy will. The third, will trye and tempt Almightie God. And if at anie time he graunt not vnto them what they inconſideratly aſke or requeſt him, then doe they murmur againſt his mercie, myldneſſe, kindneſſe, and power. But the fourth beleeue in the Lord truely, endeuour to ſerue him faithfully, remaine conſtantly in their beleefe, doubt not of his promiſes, of his mercie, grace, & power

wer, and wholly dedicate themſelues to him, meaſuring their will by his will. And as they are readie to do whatſoeuer it pleaſeth him to command, and to leaue whatſoeuer is hatefull in his ſight: ſo will they ſuffer any ſorte, trouble, labour, perſecution: yea death, to performe his pleaſure: blaming & rebuking all ſuch as offend the Lord either with incredulitie & euill life, and endeauouring both by ſound counſell & good example, to recall them from their wickednes. And this ought all good Chriſtian people do, I meane to perſwade euill liuers and all ſuch as are fallen from the right way, to haue a regard of their ſoules health, and to direct them into the path wherein the ſeruants of the Lorde ought to walke: being as ſorie for their fall & wickednes as for their owne ſinnes:

The diuell hath poſſeſſed thy heart, and deceiued thee wretched creature, and enticed thee to be ruled by him with his poyſonous counſell. But hearken to this ſimilitude appertaining to thy follie.

Foure women walked by a faire riuer, where they founde a paſſing precious ſtone. One of them ſaid: what ſhall we do with this ſtone: for wee know not the vertue of it. Another ſaide: wee were beſt caſt it awaie and not meddle with it. The thirde ſaide, let vs caſt it into the water, and if it ſwimme aboue water, it is a good ſtone. If it ſinke, it is worth nothing. At length, the fourth hauing heard the reſidue ſpeake their mindes, rebuked them thus.

Verily, you be verie vnwiſe in ſaying, that you knowe not this ſtone, whereof all the Patriarches & Prophets beare witneſſe, and

all

all the Apoſtles haue preached. For the precious ſtone haue all holie Martyres ſpread their bloud, all Saints conſecrated their liues to hardneſſe and ſufferance, and all the faithfull yet liuing forſake the world and the ioyes thereof. Of this precious ſtone and coſtly Pearle, wee finde this mention in the holie Scripture: that a wiſe merchant finding it, ſolde all that euer he had and bought it. This ſtone is *Ieſus Chriſt*, who by the worke of the holie Ghoſt, was borne of the chaſte and vnſpotted virgin Marie. He that hath this ſtone, ſhall ouercome all his enimies, and ouerthrowe all them that pitch their tents againſt him. For this ſtone is admirablie garniſhed and adorned with ſundrie vertues, great honour and much worthines. It can raiſe the dead, lighten the blinde, and cure all diſeaſes and infirmities whatſoeuer both

of

intent, which ſhee did in this maner.

I would willingly take the King your Lorde and go vnto him, but I may not leaue my playfellowes whom I greatly loue, and of whome I am likewiſe greatly loued. And therefore I cannot ſo ſoone parte from them on the ſuddein: but if I had ſome time to deliberate on the matter, it may be I ſhould thinke thereon.

Whereupon the meſſengers replyed and ſaid: The Lorde will not accept of your anſwer. For he is ſo exceeding good & of ſuch high worthines, that euery one ought with all his heart to loue him, and to forſake all the world for him. And therefore heare this ſimilitude which I will rehearſe vnto you.

A Hare running to eſcape the Hunter that chaſed him with hounds,

hounds, came by a cleere water, wherein ſeeing his image, was delighted therewith, and ſo forgetting the Hunter, ſate downe and ſported himſelfe with the ſight of his owne likenes in the water, vntill the Hunter ouertaking him, the hounds tore him to peeces.

By the Hare is ſignified, that men are ſo miſled with their owne conceipt, that they forget the Lorde, and in ſuch manner beholde and looke on themſelues in their fleſhly pleſures and worldly delightes, & ſo long play & ſport themſelues therewith, that before they be aware they be ouertaken by the hunter, that is fearfull death, who deliuereth them vnto the hounds to be torne to peeces, that is, vnto the diuel & his hell dogges to be puniſhed euerlaſtingly.

Thus may you ſee by this ſimilitude, how that the vnwiſe

virgin

ſinnes. And if they followe their good admonition, it is well. Yet howſoeuer, the Lord will not leaue them vnrewarded.

This ſimilitude appertaineth vnto the fooliſh gentlewoman, who would not know the King of all the worlde, whome ſhee forſooke, and became obedient to the diuell her lorde.

By this vnwiſe gentlewoman, are all worldly perſons noted, who by reaſon of the blindneſſe of their wickednes will not, or cannot know the liuing Lord, nor thoſe things that arebelonging to their ſaluation: ſpending all their time all their works, & all their indeuour, in gathering worldly wealth, and heaping together tranſitorie riches, in purchaſing worldly honour, and vaine reputation, and in obtaining all

all ſenſuallitie and voluptuous pleaſures of the fleſh. Their wilfoome in the ſight of God is more abominable than extreame follie: For they can doe nothing but wickednes, & are deceiued with their blinde and falſe light, being like to Owles & Battes, that are blind al day and ſee in the night. Euen ſo haue they loſt light euerlaſting, and choſen vnto themſelues the night of death.

The anſwere of the ſecond virgin,

The Kings ſeruaunts aſked the other gentlewoman, whether ſhee would take their Lorde, willing her to make them a preſent aunſwere of her intent.

virgin may well be compared vnto this Hare: for that ſhee had rather plaie with her companions & playfellowes than to follow the King of all glory whome ſhee forſooke rather then ſhee would leaue the pleaſure which her playfellowes did her: Wherefore ſhee was in like manner forſaken by the Lord of Lordes, and depriued of the euerlaſting ioy of his kingdome.

The aunſwere of the thirde maide,

THe Kings ſeruants hauing asked the thirde virgin what ſhee would doe, her anſwer was:

I am very willing to go vn-

to his Maieſtie and become his ſpouſe, but I cannot part from my frindes and kindred: ſo that the cauſe of my refuſall is to be attributed vnto them, whome in any caſe I may not leaue. Whereunto the Kings ſeruaunts ſaid: You are not worthie to be the eſpouſe of ſuch a King. For who ſo will be wedded to him, muſt take him onely and none but him, for father, mother, brother, childe, and all whatſoeuer elſe, leauing all for him, and making account of nothing elſe that is either beloow or aboue the earth but his maieſtie and glorie. Therefore hearken to a compariſon, beſeeming your wickednes.

Three ſiſters ſate together nere a great waters ſide, and being linked together by I know not what foolish loue, as three ſworne ſiſters, vowed they would not parte one

one from the other what euer became of them good or euill. Whereupon entring into an olde ruinous ſhippe which they eſpyed neere the ſhoare ſide, cloſed togither all three, and let the torne & ſeabeaten veſſell driue whither winde and weather commaunded it, forſooth to ſeeke their fortune, all three together good or bad. Shortly after being brought into the maine Sea where euery waue was readie to ſwallow vp this fooliſh loden barke, it was eſpied by three other wiſe maidens that ſailed together in another well rigd ſhip, who perceiuing the extremitie wherein the poore fooles were, made towardes them, and calling vnto them, made ſignes whereby they might vnderſtand that they came to aide them: and comming neere them, deſired them to leaue their naughtie ſhip and to come into theirs. But the three ſiſters would not breake

their vowe but ſtay where they were, to trye the end of their fortune; which was no better then all three with their ſeruiceleſſe bote to bee ſuncke as ſoone as the other maides left them.

By the three fooliſh ſiſters are vnderſtood al thoſe that being as it were, ſworn fellowes vnto the luſtes of this world & temporall pleaſures, had rather to ſpare the loue of God then the fruition of thoſe paſtimes and worldlie wantonneſſe. For which falſe loue of theirs, God ſeparateth them from him for euer. For carried vp and downe hither & thither by the waues of the daungerous Sea of this world, at length they are plunged into the bottomleſſe pit of euerlaſting death.

Now by the other three wiſe ſiſters are ment, ſuch godly and well diſpoſed perſons as ſeeing and beholding the daungerous

gerous traces of diuers, by reaſon of their wicked life and vngodly practiſes, both by precepts and examples ſeeke to reclayme and to win them from their euill inclination, to a Chriſtian life, and ſo to returne them from their wicked path, to follow the way of the Lord, and to giue ouer ſuch companie as may hinder them from trauelling to good away. For that no man is to ſinne for his neighbours pleaſure: or to doe good to another, is not any man by Gods lawe commanded to ſinne. Adam as we reade was punished ſeuerely, and all his poſterity withall: for eating the fruit at his wiues intreatie, which God expreſſely forbad him. Beſides doth the holy Scripture teach vs, that we ought to loue God aboue all things. In ſo much that this fooliſh maide vnto whom this

ſimilitude was rehearſed, was forſaken of the king, as al thoſe are alſo of God, that make more account of their luſtfull pleaſures then of him, forſaking the creator, for the thinges by him created: and thereby incurring his eternall wrath and indignation.

The anſwere of the fourth virgin.

The kings ſeruants comming to the fourth maide: asked her whether ſhe woulde be the eſpouſe of their king, and become partner of his kingdome: whereunto ſhe made this anſwere.

I knowe not to what ende I ſhould doe ſo, conſideriug I am

ſole

ſole heyre to my parents, who haue left me a rich inheritance and ample patrimonie: Inſo: much that I want no other wealth nor poſſeſſions. But they replyed in this ſort.

Conſidering you forſake the King of Kinges, and Lorde of all riches and wealth, for your poore inheritance ſake, wee muſt pronounce you vnworthy to be admitted to ſo honorable a nuptiall bedde and glorious huſband, and therefore harken what a ſimilitude we will make to bring you in to knowledge yourſelfe & contumacy.

A poore woman, whoſe goods and life lay in the handes of a mighty king: had a faire daughter, whome that king of his goodnes would haue taken to his wife: but ſhee making no accoumpt of his loue and paſſing kindneſſe, made his meſſinger this anſwere. My mother hath giuen mee a Cowe

or a Goate which yeeldeth to me milke, and a peece of grounde, whence I haue bread, and a Well where I fetch water: all which is as much as I deſire, and care not for any more, and therefore let the king keepe his kingdome to him ſelfe and ſeeke an other wife. Which aunſwere ſo diſpleaſed the kinges meſſenger, that hee replyed: O thou wretched foole that makeſt ſuch aunſwere to the king vnder whom thou liueſt, and in whoſe handes all that thou and thy mother haue conſiſteth: For as thou haſte willingly forſaken him, ſo ſhalt thou alſo forſake thy poore poſſeſſion againſt thy will, for all ſhall bee taken from thee, and his officers ſhall come and caſt thee into a dungeon, where thou ſhalt ſuffer hunger, thirſt, miſerie and all kinde of wretchedneſſe.

By the poore womans daughter, may bee vnderſtoode the

children of ẏ world, who so loue their miserable inheritãce that they care not for GOD almightie, coueting nothing but wealth and worldly reputation, all which is transitorie, and neglecting for that, the euerlasting inheritance of heauen. Al who, when they least thinke on any such matter, are sodenly taken by the officers of God almighty, namely death, who thrusteth them out of all their possessions into the prison of euerlasting damnation, which is a measured inheritance for all such as through the ioue of worldly pleasures, temporall honor and fading riches, loose Gods mercie, and thereby their owne saluation: as this virgin who for her inheritance forsooke God: for whom al wealth all riches, & all pleasure whatsoeuer ought to bee forgone and giuen ouer.

The anſwere of the fift Virgin.

THe kings meſſengers came to the fift maiden, and aſked her whether ſhee wouldе marrie with their Lorde. But ſhe anſwered: that how be it ſhe had a good minde ſo to doe, yee ſhee couldе not by reaſon that long ſince ſhe was bidden to an other feaſt to make merrie among other her acquaintance, at which feaſt ſhe might not be abſent.

Which her anſwere greatly diſpleaſed the meſſengers, for that ſhe would for loue or pleaſure, leaue him that can giue more delight, ioy and gladneſſe, then all the kings of the whole

worlde

worlde, and vnto her applyed this ſimilitude.

A certayne rich and bountiful Ladie, endued with all kindes of vertue and wiſedome: on a time kept a great feaſt, whereof the ſolemnitie both of cheere and entertainement was ſuch, that the like was neuer ſeene or heard of before: for nothing in the vniuerſall world, ſeruing for vſe or pleaſure was wanting: and that in ſuch plentie and abundance, that great ſtore remayned ſtil for more that would reſort thither. And the bountifull Lady, deſiring that as many as coulde bee had ſhould enioy the benefite and pleaſure of her feaſt, went on the top of an high hill, and with a loude voyce, as a louing mother calleth her children, cried to thoſe that were about her, that whoſoeuer deſireth to come vnto her feaſt, they ſhould all come freely and boldlie without anie feare:

For

For they ſhoulde bee all entertayned as well as anie of the reſt, neither ſhould they wante anie thing, but aboundantlye inioye whatsoeuer their hartscould wish or deſire. But by the way whereby they were to paſſe, that were inuited by this bountifull Ladie to goe to her feaſte, was a moſt ſtatelie gallant pallace, wherein dwelte a faire bewtifull Ladie, who with ſweete and tickling ſpeeches, enticed the paſſers by to ſtay with her, and to paſſe awaie the time in myrth and pleaſure: and inuiting them to ſit downe at her royall table furniſhed with all cates and delightfull daynties, poyſned moſt of them with venim, wherewith her delicat diſhes were ſawſed, whereby many thouſands euery day periſhed moſt miſerably. Which newes being brought to the eares of the vertuous and bountiful Ladie, ſhe was wonderfully greeued

with

with the loſſe of her gueſt: and ſending her meſſengers towards that Pallace, where this wicked Lady dwelt, to perſwade the paſſengers from entring into that Pallace, for that they coulde hardly eſcape death if they once gaue credit to the enticing and alluring wordes of the Ladie that dwelt within it. But alas ſimple ſoules, they made ſmal acount of ſuch perſwaſion, ſaying, what tooles ſhould we be, as long as we may liue heere in all paſtime and pleaſure: if we ſhould leaue this place and ſeeke another. Therefore will we as long as wee may bee merrie heere in this Pallace, and take our pleaſure with this goodly Lady from whom we will not parte.

By this bountifull vertuous Ladie, is vnderſtoode Gods infinite mercy, which inuyteth vs all to come vnto her, both rich and poore, young and olde ſtrong and weake. By the gal-

lant

iant Pallace, this worlde: And by the falſe Ladie, pleaſure and worldlie luſte, wherewith the wretched people is ſo enticed, as with a bayte of honye and ſugar, that they forſake and neglect the ſound counſailes of Gods preachers, that goe about dayly to perſwade them to come vnto Gods mercie, who in this ſimilitude are repreſented by the meſſengers, that the bountifull Ladie ſent to warne the paſſengers from making anie abode with the deceyptfull Ladie. Wee ſee and heare dailie, howe manie thouſandes are through the pleaſures and delights of this world brought to pittifull endes, euen to the loſſe of their liues and ſoules: for worldlie pleaſure is death to the ſoule: her ioye, bringeth woe with it, and her happe is a moſte ſure downefall from blille into wretchednelſe. All

which

which notwithſtanding wee ſee how fewe deſpiſe the worlde and with true repentance, turne vnto the Lorde. To conclude, this ſimilitude concerneth the foolish gentlewoman that choſe rather to go to her friends feaſt to paſſe away the time in plea-ſure there, then to be maried to the king of glorie.

It concerneth all them alſo, that for loue of ſhamefull and wicked delight, looſe the kingdome of God, and damne their owne ſoules.

The anſwere of the ſixt gentlewoman.

The kings ſeruants departed towardes the ſixth gentle-wo

woman, who anſwered them. That ſhee woulde goe with them to become the handmayde of their Lord. but ſhortly after altered her minde, and woulde be married to another, whome ſhe ſo loued, that ſhee would not parte from him, neither for the King, nor all his kingdome: wherunto they ſaide: Alas poore maide, more foolish then happie, eaſelie can we perceiue that you haue little honeſtie, and deſerue not to be honoured, ſeeing you ſo boldly and coylie forſake the king of kings for the loue of a poore ſimple fellow, I, ſo much that the deuil hath deceiued thee, and by meanes of wicked loue withdrawne thee from the true loue of the Lorde thy God, king of euerlaſting glorie. Hearken therefore vnto this Similitude.

A mighty merciful King was deſirous

deſirous to take to wife his hand-maide, and to inueſt her with his crowne and tytle of a Queene, ſo ſhee would promiſe to bee euer louing and faithfull vnto him: which ſhee did. But not long after fell in loue with him that heated the Ouen in the Kinges kitchin, and married her ſelfe vnto him: which being tolde the king, hee ſaide in greate anger. Since ſhee hath vſed me ſo, and preferred a knaue before mee, hauing vowed and ſworne faith and loyaltie vnto mee, I will banish her from all honour and pleaſure. And forthwith commanded both her and the Ouen heater her husband to bee ſhut vppe into the burning Ouen, neuer to bee let out againe.

By the king, is repreſented our Lorde Jeſus Chriſt, who is deſirous to marrie his poore handmaide the ſoule: and as meſſengers, ſendeth vnto her his

his holie Scripture and true Miniſters of his worde, who bring her tydings that if ſhee will turne vnto him, hee will enrich her with wealth, credit and perfit ioye. Beſides this, hee came alſo himſelfe clothed in humanitie, and cryed aloude vnto her and ſaide. Turne againe you poore & wretched ſoul vnto him that hath created you, & framed you vnto his owne likeneſſe. Turne againe I ſay, and make cleane that image of God, which you haue polluted and defiled with your ſins, and remember that the Sonne of God hath ſuffered death on the croſſe for your offences, to the ende you might become his faithfull ſpouſe. And albeit you haue ſtrayed and turned from his loue, and ſo by manie filthy and ſtinking ſinnes bee become vnworthy of him, yet if yee deſire with true repentance to

turne

turne vnto him, he will receiue you into his grace and fauour againe: otherwiſe if you make not haſt to turne vnto the Lord againe, he will vtterlie forſake you, and ſo ſhall you bee ſeperated from his glorie for euer. Bleſſed is the ſoule that turneth againe vnto the Lord, and becommeth his loyall ſpouſe: But who ſo reigneth from him to the deuill, who is the heater of the euer burning furnace in hell, and followeth his wicked counſell, ſhal with him be caſt into the ſame furnace, and there remayne for euer, as happened vnto the poore mayde, that preferred the loue of the Quen heater before the king: By whom are repreſented vnto vs all luſtfull people, who runne headlong into their damnation, by giuing themſelues ouer vnto luſt and ryot.

And thus haue I ſpoken vnto

vnto you of the ſixe gentlewomen that did forſake their bridgrome. The firſt whereof would not know him: The ſecond would not leaue her playfellowes: The third would not part from her friends and kinſfolke: The fourth would not loſe her poore inheritance: The fift woulde not bee abſent from the greate feaſte whereto ſhee was inuited: And the ſixt breake her promiſe, and had rather be married to the Ouen heater, then the king.

All theſe are maydes of diſhonour and ſhame, following the counſaile of the deuil, who in the ende will paye them the credyt they gaue him: and of theſe will I now ſay no more, but hereafterwarde will I take occaſion to talke vnto you of the birgin that left the deceypt full and dangerous path of the other ſixe maydens, and har-

ned

ned to the meſſengers of the mightie king, as ſhall hereafter be manifeſted vnto you by ſimilitudes and parables for the quickning of your conceyts, and the helping of your memories.

You ſhall alſo bee taught by reading of that which followeth, howe God ſpareth the Chriſtian ſoule, that maketh choyſe of him for her bridegrome, and howe hee endueth her with grace, and adorneth with all ornamentes, beſeeming his kingdome and glory, chaſtening her with the hand of his loue and mercy.

Of

Of the ſeuenth Virgins anſwere, of her willing acceptance of ſpiritual wedding.

The ſeuenth gentlewoman being aſked of the kinges ſeruauntes, whether ſhe would take the king of glorie for her harts ioye, made this anſwere. I haue heard ſo much of his goodneſſe, honour and power, that I cannot nor will in anie caſe refuſe to be his handmaid. But my vnworthineſſe maketh mee ſorelie afrayde, leaſt he will not thinke mee worthy of ſo great honour: and indeede I ſhoulde wholie deſpayre, but that the conſideration of the loue and zeale which I beare to=

towardes his mercifull good-nes through which I am made acceptable to his ſight: Diminiſheth my feare, and comforteth mee with ſtrong hope to obtayne his gracious fauour and good will: and therefore doe I wholly giue my will ouer vnto him.

Moreouer, I beſeech you moſt honorable meſſengers, to tell my beſt beloued, that I am readie to be diſpoſed of according to his pleaſure: Vnto whome they repyed. For as much as you humble your ſelfe, you ſhall be exalted: and this humilitie of yours is an especiall token that our Lord and king will like of you, and make you partner of his kingdome. Hearken therefore vnto this ſimilitude.

King Dauid beſought a woman to bee his queene, who honoured him with this humble aunſwere,

Lorde

Lorde I am not worthie to waſhe your ſeruantes feete, much leſſe to receiue that honour whereto your maieſtie inuiteth mee. But the King was ſo pleaſed with this her rare humilitie, that he rewarded her with the crowne, and admitted her to his bed.

Euen ſo moſt vertuous damſell, is it with you: for if you go forward as you haue begunne, and conſtantlie perſiſt in doing ſo as you haue ſaide, oure King ſhall crowne you with the tytle of a Queene, and admit you into his chamber. In meane time you ſhall expect him, and prepare your ſelfe againſt his comming. Then ſaide ſhee, I will be readie with all my wil and hearte, to doe what euer I knowe is acceptable vnto him. And they ſaid vnto her againe, he will ſende his gentlewomen and waiting maides vnto you, who ſhall inſtruct you of ſuch

things

thinges as in you may be dis-
pleasant vnto him: and they
ſhall prepare you against the
time that hee will come, and
fetch you with greate ioy and
glorie, into his euerlasting
kingdō. But in the meane time
while you bee in this worlde,
will he oneite visit your heart:
and afterwarde, in the other
worlde, perfectlie accomplish
all the rights of wedlocke in
heauen. Therefore earnestlie
attend on his waiting gentle-
women, and confidently trust
to them: following their coun-
sayll, and learning what they
do teach you: for they wel know
the manners of his Court, and
are fully acquainted with the
order of his houshoulde. And
herewith parted the Kinges
messengers from the gentle-
woman.

By which messengers, are
representeð the true teachers

ck Gods woꝛde, and zealous
pꝛeachers of his gloꝛie, who by
the woꝛde of God inuyte mens
ſoules to Gods will and ſer-
uice: that is, perſwadeth them
ſtrictie to ſubmit themſelues
vnto Gods mercie. Foꝛ al-
though the Loꝛde giueth mer-
cie and grace: yet are wee not
the nearer, vnleſſe wee meete
him with our will and readi-
neſſe, and as it were giue ouer
our willes vnto his.

And Saint Auguſtin ſaieth,
He that created thee ô man with
out thee, will not ſaue thee with-
out thee. Saint Chryſoſtome
ſaith: The earth bringeth foorth
no fruite without ſeede, and the
ſeed without earth periſheth.

To the ſeede, is compared
the mercie of God: and to the
earth, the will of a man. Foꝛ
where theſe two thinges are
ioyned and vnited, thereof
commeth fruite. But when the
mer-

mercy of God, and mans will are ſeperated: thereof commeth no ſpirituall fruite, as our Sauiour Chriſt ſaieth: Without me can yee doe nothing. Therefore who ſo ſeeketh greatly after the grace of God, vnto him is grace giuen. But who ſo flieth from the grace and mercie of almightie God, in him harboreth ſhee not: nor dwelleth not with him. For, when God with the hande of his mercie and grace, knocketh at the doore of our hearts, and findeth our will not diſpoſed to let him in: but denying his entrance, hee returneth and leaueth vs.

And therefore, as that patient, which will not entertayne a Phyſition that can cure him, is not worthie to be healed of his ſickneſſe: euen ſo in like manner, almightie God, when he dayneth to come and call at

our ſicke breaſts, and findeth vs vnwilling to entertayne him, leaueth vs in our ſickeneſſe.

In like manner alſo the Sun ſhineth not into a mans chamber, vnleſſe the windowe be ſet open to receiue his light and let in his beames. So that men muſt make their willes ſubiect vnto the will of the Lorde, to the ende it ſuffer his mercie and grace to enter into them. vnto which entrance helpeth greatly Gods woꝛde which is the fountaine of all grace and ſaluation, through which the Lord doth often find his ſpouſe, and ſhe him: I meane that when God looketh vpon the ſoule in his inward mercy and inuiteth her as it were, and ſhee giueth her will ouer vnto him, then is ſhee accepted and receiued into fauour and is made his Woꝛde, and

is

is kindled with his loue, ſo that ſhee longeth & thirſteth after his preſence: wherefore hee then to comfort hir, ſendeth his ſeruing gentlewomen, that is, vertue, to amend what is a miſſe in her.

The comming of the waighting gentlewomen, to the expecting Bryde.

AS the newe Bryde being left alone, ſate by her ſelfe, expecting the comming of the wayting gentlewomen, which her bridegroome ſhould ſend vnto her: came a woman to the doore of her houſe, whoſe preſence affrighted her ſomewhat,

by reason that she had a trumpet which shee blew: with the sound wherof the Bryde was so amazed, that she sodainelie cryed out, woe is mee: for I neuer heard the like sounde in all my life before. This trumpet seemeth to send forth this voyce three times, Wo, wo, wo vnto all that dwell on the earth.

The first woe betokeneth the certaintie of death which no man can escape. For euerie one that by birth hath receiued life in this worlde, muste once yeelde it by againe with paine and griefe; so that this woe, bringeth vnto the Bryde a certaine feare, which moueth her to take care how to obey the will and pleasure of her bridegrome. It is maketh vs also to thinke vpon this saying. O man, thinke that thou art but earth and dust,

and

and shalt once returne to earth and dust againe, which will perswade the Bride not to pamper vp her selfe and to vse her bodie too delicately, which in the ende must become the foode of wormes.

The second woe, betokeneth the hower of iudgment, when this sound is heard: Rise vp ye deade, and stand before the iudgement and tribunall seate of God, & yeelde an accoumpt of all your life, for according to your deserts shal you be rewarded. Your iudge is rightiest, in whose sight are the peace of this world, in as great an accoumpt as the riche, the seruaunt as the maister, and the subiect as the king: with him neither fauour nor bribery can preuaile: neither can wealth, power or greatnesse haue any swaye with him. For at that time and in that place, are all

mens

mens consciences layed open and knowen, not only vnto the Iudge himselfe, but also vnto all the world, that standeth before that iudgement seate: In so much, then what euer a man hath done or thought in all his life time shall be knowen vnto all, and not the deede or thought onely, but the manner, time and place also; why and where such a matter was committed, either in deede or thought.

The consideration of this, will cause the bride earnestly and diligently to take heede how she doe or thinke anie thing by daye or night that may offende his eyes that are in euerie place & see all things: And if chaunce by weaknesse she commit anie euill, she will be moued to repentance and penitence, and so auoide the punishment to come: for if she should

should doe so, she should fall in-
to the displeasure of God here-
after; and in times to come
make accompt of her sinnes, &
be punished not according to
grace, but the righteousness
and iustice of almightie God.

The third sounde of the
trumpet, which yeelded the
last voice, represented that say-
ing of our Lord, when he shall
pronounce this sentence. De-
part from me yee accursed into
everlasting fire, that was prepa-
red from the beginning of the
worlde for the deuill and his
coherentes! Goe into everla-
sting damnation, into the
paynes of hel, where the dam-
ned are bereft of all hope and
grace: for all that mans wit or
understanding can imagine or
inuent to make the bitterness
and miserie thereof unseen,
is but as a droppe of water to
in comparison to the maine sea

mens consciences layed open and knowen, not only vnto the Iudge himselfe, but also vnto all the world, that standeth before that iudgement seate: In so much, then what euer a man hath done or thought in all his life time shall be knowen vnto all, and not the deede or thought onely, but the manner, time and place also; why and where such a matter was committed, either in deede or thought.

The consideration of this, will cause the bride earnestlie and diligentlie to take heede how shee doe or thinke anie thing by daye or night that may offende his eyes that are in euerie place seeing all thinges: And if chaunce by weaknesse she commit anie euill, she will be moued to repentance and penitence, and so auoide the punishment to come: for if she

should

should doe so, she should fall in-
to the displeasure of God here-
after, and in times to come
make accompt of her sinnes, &
be punished not according to
grace, but the righteousness
and iustice of almightie God.

The third sounde of the
trumpet, which yeelded the
last voice, represented that say-
ing of our Lord, when he shall
pronounce this sentence: De-
part from me yee accursed into
euerlasting fire, that was prepa-
red from the beginning of the
worlde for the deuill and his
coherentes: Goe into euerla-
sting damnation, into the
paynes of hel, where the dam-
ned are bereft of all hope and
grace: for all that mans wit or
understanding can imagine or
inuent to make the bitterness
and miserie thereof knowen,
is but as a droppe of water to
in comparison to the maine sea

so greate is the torment that the damned shall suffer for in hell, whereof never shall bee ende, nor hope of ende. The consideration of this will cause the bride to giue ouer all worldly desire, and embrace vertue, repenting her selfe of her sinnes past, and powreth out teares for the mercy of hir best beloued bridegrome.

After that this woman had thus blowen her trumpet and therewith cast the Bride as it were in a sounde, she knocked at the doore and saide, O, you the doore, and let me come in to you. The bride being sorelie astonished to see her, for that shee seemed verie sterne, espyed that shee had a lanterne in her hande, wherewith she was somethinge comforted: and thinking that shee was sent from her bridegrome, shee let her in, and intreated her

her accordingly.
The woman entring into the Bride, and carrying in her left hand a trumpet, and in her right hand a lanterne: spake in this manner. I am sent to serue you and to doe you good, my name is Feare of God, which is the beginning of wisedome and righteousnesse. In my right hande I carrie a lanterne, wherein is the light of knowledge, which bringeth helps vnto you, and all Gods elect: For it is a sure message from God, wherewith the soule is clensed from sinne, and is a louer of all vertue wherein man may dailie see & know himselfe. And therefore Ladie Bryde, shalt thou not be without this light, nor also without this trumpet, which shall call you from all wicked inclynation, light conceyts, and awake you out of the sleepe of

sinne

ſinne, & withdraw your minde from all pride and pompe. And then ſhall the knowledge of all goodneſſe which you ſhall receiue by this light, bring great ioy vnto you and exalt you, and leade you in the way of righteouſnes, which ſhall conueigh you to your beſt beloued bridegrome: in which way you ſhal walke moſt ſuerile out of all perill and daunger. And thus haue you heard good thinges of mee, which you ſhal vſe and apply for to obtayne euerlaſting ſaluation, and ſo ſhall you receiue mercie and grace in greate abundance from him whome you ſo earneſtlie ſeeke and expect. And hauing thus ſaide, ſhee ſate downe by the Wydes ſide.

Afterwardes came another gentlewoman into the Wyde with a rod in her hande, but ſhee was young and ſeemed to

bee

ter daughter vnto the other woman: and ſetting downe on the right hande of the Bryde ſpake vnto her in this maner as followeth. I am called Spiritual chaſtiſement, & bring with me the fruit of mercy for you, ſo you will bee ruled by mee. Whereunto the Bryde anſwered, that ſhee would very willingly: But the gentlewoman replyed, It is verie good, Ladie Bride, but I dare not truſt you all together, and therefore will lay this rod by your right hande, to ſtrike you with it, if you chaſtice not your ſelfe as you ought, and rule not your affections in ſuch ſorte as becommeth the bride of our Lorde.

After ſhe had ſo ſaide, ſhee gaue her a blowe at vnawares with the rod whereof ſhe was ſorelie amazed.

The blow ſignifieth feare

bringing

bringing ſaluation, care and penſiuenes for our ſinnes: knowing that no offence may eſcape vnpuniſhed, bee it either in deed, word or thought, for it is either puniſhed with grace & mercie: or afterwardes in hell with euerlaſting paine and torment. And howbeit the bryde is touched with this fear yet can ſhe ſcarſelie paſſe ouer one day without ſinne, and remayne altogether cleane and vnſpotted. In recompence wher of, ſhee ſhall dailie with true repentance waſh her face and cleanſe it againe, to the end ſhe may enioy hir louing ſpouſe and lorde. Wherevnto helpeth greatly the ſecond blow of the rod, which ſhe receiued and betokeneth, þ no man can haue any thing of himſelf, but al muſt be granted him from almighty God: & after that a man hath receiued grace, yet is he not to

to reſt, as in ſafetie as long as he remayneth in this wretched and miſerable life: but hee muſt ſtill bee wrathfull and haue a great care how to keepe himſelfe in that good eſtate whereunto God hath called him: for he that hath grace to day, perhaps loſeth it before to morrow. Beſides this is the blow which is verie profitable to the bride, for it driueth all pride from her, ſo that ſhee perceiueth and knoweth that the grace which ſhe hath, commeth from the mercie of God, & not by reaſon of her good life. Furthermore, receiued ſhe a third blowe of the rod, which betokeneth the vncertaintie of mans eſtate in this wretched life: for that albeit men adorne their liues with honeſtie vertue and many good workes, yet cannot all that aſſure them: and this third ſtroke is alſo pro-

profitable vnto ꝯ bride, whom it humbleth greatlie: and maketh her to put all her hope in her Lord and bridegroome, forcing her will to be obedient to his commandements.

Now when as the bride had taken theſe blowes, ſhee was much moued therewith, and from the bottome of her heart, complayned of the incertaintie and frayletie of humaine life, and cryed vnto her bridegrome for comfort, deſiring him to giue her aſſurance of his euerlaſting kingdome. Whereupon the young gentlewoman ſaide vnto her: Ladie bride, I pray you be content, and follow that leſſon which I will giue you. Bee miſtreſſe of your eyes, hands, feet, eares and mouth, garde them wel, for through them entreth the fire of wicked deſire into the heart. See therefore that you bridle

bridle your ſenſes, and let them not be led by brutiy appetit, for ſo would they ſtray farre from God. Your eyes ſhall you caſt downewards, and turne them towards the ground, and imagin that thy body ſhall ere long be buried therein: or elſe looke vp to heauen, where your bridgroome the king of glory hath his habitation with his choſen Saynts, & pray vnto him that hee will graunt thee that thou maieſt bee partaker of that euerlaſting ioye. Alſo let not your eares at any time heare, or harken to any thing that may entice or allure you from almightie God, for he is a ſtrong defence to helpe you in neede, and keepe you from all euil: You muſt alſo looke to the garding of your mouth, ſuffering no euill token to paſſe from it, be it in word or laughter, mirth, ſport, derilion, impatience

tience or anger: but of al wick-
edneſſe, reſiſt the deſires of the
fleſh, as they that ſuffer a mem-
ber to be cut, leaſt the fyre that
is gotten into it, make pray of
the whole bodie: for our Lorde
and welbeloued ſpouſe will
not ſuffer you to bee farther
tempted then you are able to
beare. Furthermore in your
meate and drinke ought you
to obſerue meaſure, for glotto-
nie is cauſe of much euill.
Therefore ſhunne wine as
poyſon, for the fire of vnchaſti-
tie lyeth deeplie hid in it, as
(holie writte informeth.) For
Lot in drunckennelle lay with
both his daughters. And Pha-
rao ouercome with wine ſlew
his owne brother. Beſides this
ſhall you ſhunne idleneſſe, ſuf-
fering your hands neuer to bee
idle: for idleneſſe killeth the
ſoule. If thou ſowe little, little
ſhalt thou reape: and as long

as

as thou liueſt in this worlde, meditate on the labours of thy bridegroome, which hee hath vndertaken for thy ſake, and ſuffered euen bitter death to redeeme thee: Your clothes ſhall be ſimple and handſome and not to pleaſe humaine eies or to ſeeme well to the lyking of men, but in ſuch ſort as your example may be to the comfort of others. And as for your maners, behauiour and outward carriage, that ought to be ſuch as ſhoulde neither be pleaſant to anie man, but after that manner which ſhal be thought moſt fit and profitable for your ſelfe, and moſt acceptable to your Lorde and bridegrome, whoſe chaſtiſement you ſhall not diſdaine nor murmure when he puniſheth you: thinke not how others doe, or what they are, but what examples you giue them: And ſee you looſe

looſe not with your bad ex-
ſampie that, for which your
bridegrom hath ſuffered death,
chaſtiſement and ſhame, decke
and adorne you far more then
ſilke and purple. To conclude,
liue after this maner, and you
ſhall enioye your bridegrome,
and bee made readie againſt
the time that hee commeth to
fetch you into his euerlaſting
kingdome.

Now will I declare vnto
you what is meant by this
woman, whome I called Feare
of God; and for the eaſier vn-
derſtand.ng thereof, you muſt
vnderſtand that beſides this
diſtinction of Feare natural and
enforced, which both are com-
mon to all men that liue in
this worlde: for euery one na-
turally feareth death, and is
enforced to feare captiuitie
or any ſuch like harme or miſ-
chiefe that may befall him.

There

There are three kindes of feare: the firſt whereof is cal-led Seruil, for that through this feare men are forced there to leaue ſinne and wickednelle, for feare of hell and the paynes thereof: as ſeruants and ſlaues pleaſe their Lordes and may-ſters for feare of ſtripes. And howbeit, hee that in this ſorte anoydeth ſinne, deſerueth no reiwarde, yet is this feare a meſſenger of mercie, when as men in their youth and begin-ning of their life are through it turned from their wicked-nelle, and therby eſcheiw ſinne. This feare I ſay bringeth vnto men the holy ghoſt, but ſtayeth not long with them himſelfe: And euen as a needle drawing a thread through a peece of ſilke or other precious ſtuffe to ſow or worke in the ſame, leaueth the thread in the worke, but it ſelfe is not ſuffe-red

red to remayne there, euen so is this seruile feare a preparer or forerunner of loue, when as men by it are brought to doe good workes and to liue well, the exercise, vse and often doing whereof, maketh this well doing and good life grateful vnto them, and so are brought to loue it, whereby seruile feare is expelled & remayneth no longer in them, considering that thereby they are brought to liue well, and to do good works not through feare, but for loue.

The second feare is called, when a man hath vndertaken to liue honestlie and vertuouslie, and goeth about to withstand euill customes, and turne himselfe from the way of sinne. And this feare hath two eies: one of them looketh vpwardes to God almightie, to the end that men should of loue obey his

his commandements, the other looketh downe to hell and beholdeth the torments thereof, to the end that men ſhould not depart from God, and ſo ſhould ouercome the forces of euill cuſtome.

This feare is a mother of the ſoules health, and driueth away the ſpotters of ſinne, being as it were the firſt beginning of ſpirituall life, which breedeth all vertue and good fruite, which may eaſily bee perceiued by this, that when this woman named the Feare of God, went in to the bride, ſhe carried in with her a lanterne with light in it, wherwith the Bride was preſently comforted. for the light of feare bringeth greate helpe & furtherance to the ſoule, which through it, feareth the torments of hell, & therefore deſireth to accompliſh the will and pleaſure of God

of God, & to obey his precepts and commandements, and ſo hopeth to enioy euerlaſting peace with his euerlaſting maieſtie.

The thirde feare being the beſt, is called childiſh feare, or the feare of children: As when men feare almighty God after that manner which children feare their fathers, & of meere loue not forced or constrained thereunto, doth the will of God and obſerue his precepts and commandements, taking heed with earneſt care that he offend or diſpleaſe not his lord God and father with ſinne.

This feare is accompanied with ſo much loue, that though there were neither heauen nor hell, yet would it eſcheiwe ſinne and obey the will and commandements of God. This feare I ſay is perfit, and is neuer ſeparated from loue and cha

charitie. The firſt two kindes of feare bringeth the beginning of good life, but the third maintaineth it, and cauſeth continuance of all grace and mercie, as we finde written by the Prophet: Feare God all yee his Saints. Alſo Saint Ierome ſaieth: Who ſo remayneth in perfit feare, is aſſured againſt the temptations and aſſaults of the Deuill. And Saint Auguſtine: By howe much the more you feare, by ſo much the more ſhall you auoyde ſinne. This bleſſed feare, ioyfull loue, and merciful chaſtiſement, all three euer agree, and ſpring one out of the other: For feare bringeth loue, and loue yeeldeth chaſtiſement as the Prophet Eſaias ſayeth. The treaſure of true loue conſiſteth in feare: For the feare of God is ſo ſtrong and puiſant that it chaſeth away all the enemies of the ſoule, according

to the ſaying of ꝧ Prophet. The angell of God is ſent for the deliuerance of him that loueth the Lord.

Good Lord God, how many are there ſpoyled in this world who walking out of the feare of the Lorde, at one time or other end their liues miſerable and ſo fall into death euerlaſting. The conſideration of all this, will bring the bride of Chriſt to feare and loue the Lorde her Bridegrome, and maintaine and keepe her in his grace, till the ende of her life.

After theſe came in vnto the Bride a noble gentlewoman, and was with great reuerence entertayned by the other two. Feare of God and Spiritual chaſtiſement, and ſay vnto her, you are heartily welcome good ſiſter, for wee looked for your comming to the Bride. Shee an-

answered. I can but thanke you, for that I willingly come where I am welcome. Shee came in with greate maiestie and seuere countenance, bearing in her left hand a sworde and in her right hand a crown adorned with golde and precious stones. This sword wounded the Brydes heart with sorrow, but the crowne brought her great solace: for she desired in her heart that shee might haue it: And the gentleman spake, My name is Iustice, I beare a crowne and a sworde, who so is desirous to haue the crowne, must yeeld himselfe to my sworde, and diligently obserue my precepts. But who so shunneth my waies, and hauing declyned from the path wherein I brought him, and turneth not againe, my sworde shall smite him, and he shal neuer enioy thee rowne or euer-

laſting ioyes glory. And therefore Ladie bride will I tel you of ſome blowes that my ſworde hath ſmitten.

The firſt blowe was that, wherewith my ſworde ſmote the Angells out of heauen for their pride into the bottomles depth of hell, where they muſt remayne for euer. Therefore Ladie bride, if thou wilt auoid this blow: take heede you embrace not pride, and become not lofty minded, for theſe thinges are quite contrary to the bridegromes will and diſpoſition. For he to ouercome ſinne came into this worlde in all humility, and therefore ſhall not that man that is proude, haue anie parte of his inheritance, or dwell with him in his kingdome. For the Prophet ſayeth, The proude periſhe in their pride. and our Lorde himſelfe ſayeth, who ſo exalteth him

ſelf

ſelfe ſhall be exalted. Therfore ſhal the Lord God tread down the crowne of their pride, and vtterlie ouerthrow their honour, for in the end ſhall their lofty conceypts fayle them, and their great mindes be quayled, when their carcaſſe and ſtinking fleſh ſhal be throwen to the earth to be eaten of the wormes, and their ſoules rewarded in hell with terror and torment in euerlaſting payne without end.

The ſecond blow was that wherewith my ſworde ſmote Adam and Eue out of Paradice, for their diſobedience, ſo that they were forced euer after to remayne on earth, moſt painfully labouring euen with the ſweate of their foreheads to maintaine their life, & were adiudged to continue with all their poſteritie in the anger and wrath of almightie God

their creatour, vntill the bridegrome Jeſus Chriſt the Sauiour of the worlde brought vnder their diſobedience with his wonderfull obedience, and by his death ouercame death it ſelfe, making ſatiſfaction in himſelfe for all the ſinnes of the whole worlde & the ſeed of Adam.

Therefore Ladie Wilde, take heede thou flyde not from me by diſobedience, and neglect my precepts, leaſt you bee mett with all as was king Saul, who for breaking the bond of obedience was depriued of the holy ghoſt, & cut off from his kingdome, which was giuen to another.

The third bloud was that wherewith my ſworde ſtoode the whole worlde wherein it was drowned with that generall and vniuerſall deluge for the wickednesſe thereof; except thoſe

thoſe that were ſaued in the Arke.

My ſworde ſlew all that liued on the earth, for ẏ depth of waters roſe aboue all the Mountaines of the earth, for the great ſinnes and wickednesſe of the people, inſomuch that the Lord ſaide that he repented that her had created man.

My ſword hath alſo ſmitten the fiue Citties of Sodoma and Gommorra, for the great ſinne of vnchaſtitie and vnnaturall luſt: Wherefore the Lorde let fire and brimſtone fall from heauen, which conſumed all the people that were in thoſe places, and caſt them into the low habitations of hell, there to be burned with fire euer burning. Therefore Ladie Bride take exſample by theſe wretched people, embrace chaſtitie and purenesſe of life to

the ende you may enioy your bridegrome, who so loueth chastitie and cleanesse of life, that he woulde beborne of a most pure and vnspotted Virgin, and chose vnto him pure and chast seruants. For there is nothing on the whole earth that so quickely and easely bringeth both body and soule to destruction, as vnchastitie and lust, wherewith who so is possessed is not easelie brought from it: and cannot leaue it without much a doe and vnmeasurable care and labour: and not without GOD Almightyes infinit grace and mercie. Neither doth the diuel with any other thing catch so many soules, as with the nets, snares and Sinnes of lust and vnchastitie: for which sinne also God almightie hath punished the worlde more then for any other thing. Therefore Ladie Bride, beware of vncha-

Repentance ſaid, Lady bride, take this water and waſh your ſelfe with it, and you ſhall become cleane, pure and fayre, and your bridegrome will then like you, and ſay thus vnto you. You are my beſt beloued, in you remayneth no ſpot: the fountaine of mercie hath waſhed thee cleane.

The other gentlewoman called Repentance ſayde alſo vnto the Bride: take this towel and wipe your ſelfe with it, and you ſhall become as cleane and pure as Chriſtall puryfied from all ſtaynes. If you vſe this often, your face will be waxen ſo fayre & ſo beautiful, that your bridegrome will prayſe and commend you in preſence of his peeres, ſaying, Behold her my friends, how like you her? then will they anſwere: Lorde ſhee is verie bewtifull and chaſte, and the commendable gentlewo-

woman is worthie to bee your maieſties Bride.

The thirde gentlewoman, called Amendment, ſpake vnto the Bride in this ſorte. Take this ſalue Ladie Bride, and annoynt thy ſelfe therewith: for it will cure thee, and heale all ſuch wounds as ſinne hath wrought in thee heeretofore, and ſo ſhal you become cleaner and fayrer then the Sunne, in ſo much that your bridegroome will take exceeding delight in your beawty, & ſay vnto you, come my Bride, my ſiſter and ſweeteſt loue into my Courte and kingdome: to the ende I may crowne thee and yeelde thee the ſcepter of my mercy. Therfore Lady Bride, if you vſe this ſalue well, you ſhall receiue ſtrength, force and health therwith.

And ſo al theſe gentlewomen went rounde about the Bryde, pray-

prayſing her ornaments, ſaying: Ladie bride, it liketh us wonderfull well that you are ſo graceful, and we praye you to continue ſo, & take great heede that vnchaſtitie ſpoyle you not of your beautie, to the ende you may in this worthie eſtate expect the comming of your bride grome, when her meaneth to fetch you to his heauenly home as he hath promiſed to doe by his meſſengers.

The meaning of theſe three gentlewomen is; that repentance or ſorrow for ſinnes committed, true confeſſion or acknowledgement of the ſame, and Satiſfaction or Amendment for the ſame, ought to bee vnited together, for the cleanſing and waſhing away ſinne from the ſoule of man, yet this notwithſtanding, when a man is ſuddenly taken, if he repent himſelfe of all his greeuous

ſinnes

ſinnes, and confeſſe and acknowledge them before God almightie truely, being moſt willing and ready to amende his wickednelle, and leade a more godly and new life, ſo it would pleaſe god to grant him longer time thereto, he dyeth in hope of Gods incomprehenſible mercie: for that he dyeth in extreame ſorrow for his ſinne, and conceiueth paſſing griefe that hee liued ſo wickedly, and may not liue to amend, and reconcile himſelfe to almightie God: but alſo he that any man depart this world without repentance for his ſinnes, & extreame ſorrow that he hath offended againſt his Lord God, and doth not truely confeſſe his ſinnes vnto almightie God, & acknowledge them, time being offered him thereto, hee cannot but incurre Gods wrath and bee punished accordinglie.

For

For as men ſinne by thought, word and deede, ſo muſt they be reconcyled vnto the Lorde, through repentance, acknowledgement and amendment, or at leaſt, ſure and conſtant purpoſe to amend and leade a new life.

By the water that Repentance brought in a baſen, is vnderſtoode the gift of teares which followeth and accompanieth true repentance: For conſidering that repentance is an inward anxietie and vexation of the minde, loden with ſorrow and griefe, the ſure and onely token whereof is the eie drowned in teares, whoſoeuer is moued with true contrition and feeleth the greeuous paine of a right repenting hearte, cannot choose but ſhed teares: which grace of ſhedding teares proceedeth only from the mercy of God through Jeſus Chriſt.

And

And for three things eſpecially do men repent themſelues and ſhead teares: the accompliſhment of ſinne, neglect of doing of good workes, and the loſſe of time. This water cauſed to fall from thy eyes by repentance, floweth as I ſaide from the mercie and grace of God almightie, who therwith watereth the Garden of our ſoules, to the end flowers of vertue and godlineſſe maie grow therein. Whoſoeuer therefore hath receiued this water of grace, let him vſe it well, and thanke almightie God for his mercie: for this water (I meane theſe teares) quench not but kindle the fyre of ſpirituall loue, and cleanſe the ſoule from all ſpottes & ſtaynes of ſinne.

Now confeſſio, who brought with her a white towell, is ſo induced to ſhame, that after wee

we haue been pricked with the pinching griefe of repentance for our wicked life, and ſo ſhed teares for the ſame, wee muſt confeſſe and acknowledge thoſe our ſinnes before almightie God, for which wee are ſo ſorie and repentant which our humble acknowledgement or confeſſion, will as a white towell take away all the durt and filth of ſinne, alreadie waſhed with the teares of true repentance, and ſo wholly cleanſe our ſoules, and make vs acceptable vnto our Lord God. Saint Auguſtin ſayeth, How a man doth more often confeſſe his ſinnes vnto almightie God, ſo much the eaſier doth he obtayne mercie and forgiueneſſe. And a pure conſcience and vnſpotted ſoule cannot abide to be clogged with anie lode of ſinnefull blemiſh, and therefore doth flee flie vnto almightie God in all

times

times of daunger, & refreſheth her ſelfe with the comfort ſhee receiueth, and ſayeth, O Lord, how ſweete is thy ſpirit in me and how louing is thy grace O heauenly bridegroome.

Then afterwards commeth Amendment, and bringeth a boxe with ſalue made of frankenſence, Myrre and Oyle, whereby are three things repreſented vnto vs, for our hearing and ſoules good.

The firſt is, the Frankinſence which ſmelleth ſweete, and by it is vnderſtoode meditation and praier, wherwith the ſoule being annoynted, as with a ſalue is healed and cured of all ſpirituall ſickeneſſe, and is in that ſorte reſtored vnto God almightie: as Saint Ierome ſayeth. Intentiue prayer lifteth a man aboue the earth, and caryeth him to the height of heauen. The Prophet ſayeth, you

ſhall

ſhall meditate and pray vnto the Lord, prayſe him with all honor and glorie. And Salomon ſayeth: The prayer of the humble pierceth the clouds. And as S. Auguſtin ſayth Praier cauſeth GOD to become gratious and merciful vnto the ſinner. Therefore is prayer as a ſweete and pleaſant ſent of frankenſence vnto the Lord, eſpecially if it be accompanyed with true zeale and ſincere love, and then is the heart made as it were an alter from which deuout prayer as ſmoke of frankenſence ryſeth & is carryed vnto God, where it obtayneth grace and remorſe. And therfore is prayer twofold: For either men pray for mercie and forgiuenesſe of ſinnes, intending and purpoſing afterwardes to liue rightwoully in the feare of the Lord, and this prayer is of ſuch force and efficacie, that there-

with they recouer their saluation which they had lost before through their wickednes: Or, men pray after they haue obtayned grace and forgiuenesse of sinnes, moued thereto, onely by meere loue and feruent desire of heauenly contemplation, in so much, that then their hearts are possessed with perfite loue, & are so pierced with the ioye and comfort of Gods wonderfull mercie, that they delight in nothing so much as in continual prayer and meditation of such thinges as appertayne vnto their saluation: and that not so much with outwarde wordes, as inwarde thought of the heart.

Euen so reade wee in the first booke of Kinges: That Anna prayed not with her lips: but with her heart, and she obtayned of the Lorde God, that for which she prayed: for prayer is very

verie profitable, and tranſporteth the heart of man into heauen before the ſight of God, and there drowneth it in perfite loue: for it cannot parte thence without exceeding great fruit and mercie. So that this is without all controuerſie, that whoſoeuer will intentiuelie pray vnto GOD, muſt let his heart ſpeake more then his mouth, as Saint Auguſtin ſayeth. What needs is it to vſe the lippes, conſidering that the heart itſelfe is a voyce. Therfore ſayeth Eſaias of thoſe that pray only with ther lipes, This people onely honoureth me with their mouth, but ther hart is far frō me. Prayer is alſo accepted of the Lorde in ſtede of faſting and deedes of charitie: for it falleth out very often that a man cannot faſt by reaſon of his great weakeneſſe and infirmitie of his body, and alſo that he is poore, and hath not where-

withal to ſupplie the wants of his neighbour, in which caſe GOD conſidereth the will of ſuch a perſon, and accepteth his prayer, I meane the good diſpoſition of his hearte, which meditateth of well doing, and is occupyed in contemplation of heauenly thinges, how hee may pleaſe his Lord God.

The other parte of this ſalue is Myrre, which is bitter, and betokeneth faſting, wherewith wee ought to bridle our bodies and chaſte our affections: to the end that they may continue obedient to the ſpirite: neither to by faſting only vnderſtood abſtinence from meate, but alſo all ſuch other Spirituall chaſtiſement as is neceſſarie to humble mans thoughtes, and to keep him in the eſtate of Gods mercie, from falling into ſinne. Againe, Moyſes by faſting obtayned ſo much fauour of God,

that

that he ſpak vnto him by word of mouth, and gaue vnto him the law contayned in the ten commandements. Salomon by faſting obtayned wiſedome. Helias, the fierie Chariot, Daniel, the vnderſtanding of God, the three innocent children in the burning furnace, felt not the heat of the fire: and Saint Iohn Baptiſt by faſting came to baptize our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: For as by eating in paradiſe we firſt were brought into the diſpleaſure and danger of almightie God, and ſo deprived of the pleaſures of Paradiſe: ſo is ſobrietie and temperance with due abſtinence, a readie way to leade vs to the mercie of God, and that heauenly Paradiſe, where all ioyes flow abundantlie: which the Prophet knowing, faſted ſo long, till his knees were worne and conſumed.

We ought also to be merciful and charitable, shewing it towards our next neighbour. Neither doth charitie onelie consist in giuing meate to them that are hungry, drinke to the thirstie, and clothes to the naked, with such like: as lodging to them that are destitute, seruice to them that want helpe &c. But also in inwardly pitie and remorse of our neighbours griefe, sorrow or danger, either of body or soule: for then ought wee to helpe and comfort him, with word, deed, counsaile and good ensample, yea also with prayer vnto almightie God for him. For vnto those that are charitable: will our Dauiour Lorde Iesu Christ saye at the time of general iudgement.

Come yee blessed of my father, enter into the kingdome prepared for you from the beginning of the worlde, for what you haue done

done to the leaſt of mine in pitie & charitie, that you haue done vnto mee. And ſurelie it is as a thing impoſſible that they who exerciſe true charitie, ſhould haue an euill ende, ſo good a thinge is it, and ſo acceptable vnto almightie God; inſomuch that whoſoeuer is pitifull and mercifull to his neighbour, vnto him alſo will the Lorde be mercifull, and not deny him his grace. And ſo commeth it to paſſe, that though a man who is charitable and loueth his neighbour according to Gods commandements, do fall into ſinne, yet doth hee not periſh, but findeth God mercifull vnto him, in ſending him his grace, and keeping and preſerving him from that exceſſiue fall of ſinne: which throweth men downe head long from Gods face & depriueth him of all grace and mercie. And this

moued the Prophet to breake foorth in theſe woordes. O Lord thy mercie is great towards me, for thou haſt ſaued me from the deepth of hell. For how be it, he haw ſinned very often againſt the Lord, yet Gods mercie ſtaied him, and kept him to amendment, for that her had ſhewed great pittie and mercy vnto his enemies, of whom he coulde many times haue been reuenged if hee would But I haue declyned ſome thing too much from my purpoſe, and therefore will returne againe to the Bryde.

The Bride being accompanied with the gentlewomen afore ſaide, and attending the comming of the Brydegroome, there came in vnto hir another gentlewoman, farre in beawtie ſurpaſſing the former, and was by them very courteouſly entertayned and welcommed. Her face

face was as cleere as Chriſtal, and her eyes gliſtered as the Sonne, and looked vpwardes towarde heauen: in her hande a Myrrion: to be ſhort, her preſence made the Bryde wunderful ioyfull: vnto whom ſhe ſpake ſaying, Ladie Bryde, my name is wiſedom. I bring you heere a looking glaſſe: wherin you ſhall behold and ſee wunderfull things, whereupon the bride looking in the glaſſe, perceiued ſuch ſtrange thinges, that the very ſight thereof caſt her in a ſweete ſound, whereat Lady wiſedome laughed with the reſt of the gentlewomen, ſaying: Let her be a while and ſay nothing, for nowe doth ſhee learne ſuch heauenly matter, that ſhe will be able to talke of wonderfull things. And anone after the Bryde roſe out of her ſowonde very quietly and ſayde nothing, but her face was ſo

attyred that Ladie wiſedome eaſely marked what ſhee had ſeene, and ſpake vnto her after this manner: I am ſure Ladie Byde that diuers heauenlie viſions haue appeared vnto you, which I pray you reueale vnto mee: and I will make thoſe things knowen vnto you wherunto your vnderſtanding cannot attaynt. The Byde anſwered: I haue ſeene firſt in the looking glaſſe ſeuen woꝛdes, the ſtrange conſideration wherof, amaꝛed me wonderfully, and theſe are they. Verbum eructatum, verbum aſſimilatum, verbum imaginatum, verbum creatum, verbum incarnatum, verbum ſacratum, & verbum inſpiratum. Then ſayde wiſedome, Ladie Byde, you haue in a ſhoꝛt time ſeene many thinges, contayned in theſe fewe woꝛdes, but the meaning of them is very great and requireth

requireth a long time to make the ſame manifeſt & knowen: yet will I as ſhortly as I can for your inſtruction and ſatisfaction declare the ſenſe of them vnto you.

The firſt word, verbum creatum, called in English

and by it is deliuered vnto vs the miſterie of the holy & bleſſed Trinitie, by whom all things are made and created: One God and three perſons without beginning or ending: The power of the father, wiſdome of the Sonne, and goodneſſe of the holy Ghoſt, is ſeene & perceiued in the whole frame of this worlde, with all thinges created therein, the wonderfull order by which all thinges are diſpoſed and the beawtie wherwith each thing is garniſhed and adorned. The earth accompanied with the waters, the Sunne riſing and

fal

ſalling and with all other celeſtiall lampes in the heauens compaſſing the earth, and giuing light vnto thoſe that dwel thereon. Therfore Ladie haue are you to meditate vpon the holy Trinitie, God the father, Sonne, and holy Ghoſt, by whome, and in whome are and conſiſt all things.

The ſecond worde in Latin called verbum aſſimilatum, may be engliſhed, The worde reſembled, for it reſembleth vnto vs the eſſence and nature of Angels, the leaſt whereof in the excellence of his creation and being, is aboue all other creatures, and endewed with more knowledge and wiſdom then euer ante man, how learned a Doctor ſoeuer hee weere, could by all labour and induſtrie apprehend or attaine vnto, wherby we may gather the power of their creatour, vnder whoſe

whose subiection & obedience they liue. There is in Angels a dignitie of creation, a grace of stabilitie, a loue of their maker, a sight of God, a power in workes, a sufficiencie, a being, a penetrant vnderstanding, a cõtinual labour, whose reuerence and obedience toward their creator is such, that God himselfe resteth in them, whose wonderfull workes are to be seene, not onely in those excellent gifts & graces, but also in the sacred police, and nine orders of the Angels which are also diuided into three wards or companies.

The first order called Seraphim, receiueth more diuine loue then the rest. The second Cherubim shineth brighter then the rest in Diuine light. The third is called Thrones, and is the Seate of GOD, wherin sitteth iudgment and iustice. The fourth Dominations, haue re-

receaued the greateſt rule and Lordſhip of all. The laſt called poteſtates or Powers, are preuoſts ouer the other lower Angels. The firſt is of the principalities, whoſe hande is ſo ſtronge againſt our enemies, that they cannot hurte vs ſo much as otherwiſe they could The ſeuenth is of vertues or ſtrong, whoſe office is to preſent the gifts, and execute the commandements of God. The eighth is the Quier of Archi-Angels, the great meſſengers and honourable embaſſadours of almightie God. The ninth is of the laſt Angels, who of all the orders are neereſt vnto vs, and aſſiſt vs in time of nede againſt our enemies.

Theſe are the nine Quiers of Angels, three alwayes goe to the making of one compa-nie in the Hierarchie: Like as in the diuine Trinitie there is

a

a trinitie of perſons, and an vnitie in the eſſence of God.

The thirde worde, verbum imaginatum, may bee called in Engliſh, the worde thought or conceiued: By which wee are taught that God hath created vs according to our intrinſecall being, after the image of himſelfe and his owne being, couering this our eternall nature: (I meane thy ſoule,) with the body, that is ſubiect to concupiſcence, weakneſſe, ſickeneſſe, and mortalitie. There are three eſpecial powers in man: Thought, will, and vnderſtanding: when theſe three are ioyned and knit together in Gods mercie, they breede in man a wonderfull and ſweete meditation of GOD his creator, which moueth him wholly to bow himſelfe, and all that hee can doe, to the ſeruice of his maieſtie.

For

For when man remembreth & conſidereth that almighty God hath made him of earth & ſyme ſo worthy a creature, & giuen him a ſoule of eternall ſubſtaunce according to his owne Image and likeneſſe, and then afterwards applyeth his will & vnderſtanding to weigh & conſider the ſame, and friendly to beleeue it, therof proceedeth a mindfull acknowledgement & thankſgiuing for the ſame, and ſo at laſt is he brought to this perſwaſion that hee ought to keepe this image of his ſoule, made after ſo excellent a pattern and example, without ſpot of filthy ſinne, and to reſiſt manfully the deſires of ȳ fleſh, which for that he cannot do without the infinit mercy of that eternall creatour, by whome and after whoſe likeneſſe his ſoule and body were made and vnited together, he is by that conſide-

ſideration and meditation put in remembrance wholly to humble and ſubmit himſelfe in thought, word and deede, as it becommeth a creature to doe vnto God his creator.

The fourth worde, Verbum creatum, (which ſoundeth in Engliſh) the word made or created, repreſenteth vnto vs the creation of al things in heauen & earth, by the contemplatiõ of which creatures wee are as it were led by the hand to a ſenſible knowledge of the inuiſible & inſenſible God that framed thẽ: for by viſible things a man is brought to the knowledge of things inuiſible, as is manifeſt in the miſtery of the holy Trinitie, which may be comprehended by the ſimilitude of the ſun. For the Sunne hath a circle where with it is compaſſed Light and heate. And as this circle of the Sunne, ſo the holy

holy Trinity hath neither be-
ginning nor ending. More-
ouer, by the being of the Sun,
we reſemble the Father, by
the light, the Sonne, and by
the heate the holy Ghoſt: and
they are inſeperable: for hee
that can giue mee the light
without the Sunne, and the
heate without the fire, vnto
him will I giue the father
without ꝯ ſon & the holy ghoſt.
The voyce commeth with the
word, the light with the ſun, &
the heate with the fire: where-
fore Ladie bride, thou muſt di-
ligently attend for the lord thy
bridegroome, and louingly re-
ceiue him in his creatures
which he ſo wiſely hath crea-
ted. Yet thou muſt not be let nor
hindred by any creature that may
winne thee from the loue of
GOD but rather deepely and
ſeriouſly conſider with thy ſelf
what ſumptuous and magnifi-
cent

cent pꝛeparatiõs he hath m ade
foꝛ vs, that hath heere ſo glozi=
ouſly made and oꝛdayned all
thyngs foꝛ our neceſſities.

Vnto all this anſwered the
bꝛide ſaying, Lady Wiſedome
thou haſt diſcourſed ſo much
and ſo wiſely, that I am ra.is
hed with thy woꝛdes: notwith-
ſtanding, I muſt craue leaue
to interrupt thy ſpeech a whyle
whyle I relate vnto thee viſi=
ons which I haue ſeene in the
looking glaſſe, and the ſecrets
contayned in the woꝛd created.
Wiſdom replyed and ſayd, La-
die Bꝛide, I deſire nothing
moꝛe then to heare thoſe viſi=
ons declared by thee, that I
may afteꝛwaꝛdes inſtruct and
latisfie thee in the expoſition
theꝛeof, without offenſe ſpeak
en, and repoꝛt the things that
thou haſt ſeene in the Glaſſe.
Then began the bꝛide to ſpeak
and ſayde. I ſaw a great Dea

tolled

tolled with waues, and in the middeſt thereof a weake maſt, and about the maſt men laboring night and day to roote it vp and fell it downe: On the maſt I ſaw a wheele rowling without reſt, and vnder the wheele a deepe pit, whereout aſcended a lothſome ſtench and the pit it ſelfe was full of noyſome wormes and fiery dragons. On the wheele were pitched ſeuen tents, out of the which I heard a loud and pitifull cry of men that had no reſt, of whome many were fallen into the pit, and torne in peeces by the cruell Dragons.

I ſaw beſides a verie fayre and bewtifull woman: going roundabout the wheele, and grieuouſly lamenting for the fall of the men, and proclaymming with a loud voyce. All that will come and ſeeke after mee I will ſaue, that they fall

fall not into the pitte, but fewe they were that hearkened to the voyce and followed her, and manie that fled her, and ſo fell headlong downe into the pit. But ſhee moſt louingly embraced and graciouſly entertayned all ſuch as followed her, as her childzen, and led them farre from this dangerous pit, to a fayze fielde adozned and beautified with all kindes of pleaſant Trees, and her ſelfe ſuddainly daniſhed from them, and returned to a land that bringeth forth all good thinges.

I ſaw moreouer fiue Virgins with other maydes in the tents, from whence I returned by the way of the fayze fielde, to my Bridegrome, when they deſpayred and fel down into the pit, and the noiſe of them was heard farre off, like to the noyſe of the great Thunder.

I thanke the faithfull embaſſadours, by whoſe counſell I was warned to take heed, and ſo I eſcaped away from them. So the Bryde left ſpeaking, and layd her downe in wiſedoms boſome to reſt. Then ſaide wiſedome to the virgins that ſtood by, Let vs ſing and extoll with harps and ſhalms and Miols the prayſes of the Bryde, whereat the Bryde when ſhee had layen downe a while, began to wonder and ſayde. Moſt louing Virgins, you haue made ſweete and heauenly muſicke while I lay muſing and meditating of ſecret thinges: for I ſaw in the tents ſuch fearefull ſights, that my heart ſprunge within mee for ioy that I had ſo happily eſcaped the fall of the fooliſh virgins.

Then ſpake wiſedome, Lady Bryde, thou haſt indeede great cauſe

cauſe to reioyce that thou haſt eſcaped from their deſtruction. What I pray thee tell me what thou ſaweſt in the tents. The Bride anſwered and ſayde: In the firſt Tent I ſaw men puft vp in their maner, and ſwolne with pride, riding vpon Peacockes. They aſſayed to flie, but could not, and each one endeuored to exalt himſelf aboue other, which cauſed greate ſtrife and contention amongſt them. Vanie ( ) were among them which exalted themſelues very high, and the men alſo, vntill they fell into the pit: at whoſe fall the heauens reioyced: after this, I heard a voyce crying in the tent, I ſaw the vngodly lifted vp as leaders, and afterwards vaniſh awaie, and their place was neuer founde.

This voyce they regarded not, wherefore they fell from high

high into the pit, & afterwarde were neuer ſeene.

In the ſeconde tent I ſaw much people committing many folies and vanities, and among them blacke Apes ſhewing vnto men many miſerable examples and exerciſes, and a voyce crying. O you ſonnes of men, how long wil you be hard harted and follow vanities. notwithſtanding they regarded not the voyce, and ſo fell into the pit.

In the third tent I ſaw many men, young and olde, greate and ſmall, poore and rich, and laden with the affayres and buſines of this world. Theſe men were intangled with many affayres and rayſed heauy buildings on weak foundations.

Their buildings were ſo heauy and high, and their foundations ſo weake, that they fell into the pit. Among theſe

these I saw many Wolues & Foxes grinning & biting one another: and lastely I hearde a voyce that saide. That man is deceiued, whose heart is exercised in the desire of riches: he gathereth goods and treasures in heapes, and knoweth not who shal enioye them. But the voyce preuayled not with them: for they neuerthelesse labored in vaine, and fell into the pit.

In the fourth tent I sawe men passing their time in naughtinesse, banketing and drunkennes, they ate gal with their meate, & swollowed poyson with their drinke, whereof they died and fel into the pit: amongst whome there were many blacke Swine which made a greate shoute when the men fell into the pit: With that I heard another voyce out of the Tent

saying: By the vnho'sommesse of meates and drinkes, manie die both bodie and soule. But they respected not the voice, and fell also.

In the first Tent I saw men who had bounde and linched themselues in vngodlie loue and friendship, and would not disalow those wicked bands of sinefu l amitie which they had contracted: these men wer girt with serpents as with cordes, & were ful of festering wounds, byles and filthy corruption. Heauy and greate was their fall: for they thrust one another downe with violence, and were neuer seene returne againe. With that a voyce cryed from the tent saying, that carnal loue blindeth a man, and driueth him to death and euerlasting misferie. This voyce also passed very greate, and the men

men fell downe into the pit & periſhed.

In the firſt tent, I ſaw men that late mulling, and deſiring after the wiſedome of this world, they turned their backs to the Sunne, and their faces to the Moone. Many ougly Owles and Batts flew ouer their heads, and let fall their doung vpon their eyes, wherewith they were ſtricken ſtarke blinde. And a voice was heard that ſaid: The wiſedome of this worlde is foliſhnes before God: But they contemned the voice and fell into the darke pit.

In the ſeuenth tent I ſawe men on ſleepe, vnto whome theeues came in theeues, and ſtole away all that they had. I heard alſo a voice ſay, Watch and praye, you know not when the daye of death will come.

But the voyce auayled them not, for they were drowned in a dead ſleepe, and could not awake: ſo the theeues came and ſpoyled them, and threw them ſleeping into the ſtinking pit.

When the Bride had recounted all theſe things, then began Wiſdome to ſpeake, and ſaide: Ladie bride: the viſions which thou ſawest are true, as willingly & patiently thou haſt related vnto vs, I wil alſo expounde and interprete vnto thee, that thou mayeſt by the example of thoſe that fell into the pit, beware and worke thereby thine owne ſafetie and ſecuritie.

The wauing ſea which thou ſawest, betokeneth the wide & weary world, wherin ther is nothing elſe but heauineſſe, ſorrow, griefe, paine, imperfections, diſeaſes, neceſſities, and ma-

manifolde miſeries that fall vpon and oppreſſe the ſoules of men.

The weak maſt which thou ſawest in the middeſt of the raging ſea, ſignifieth the life of man, which death daye and night grubbeth & diggeth at, vntil at laſt it fall downe.

The wheele ſignifieth thoſe that truſt in vnſtable fortune, from whence they fall into the pit of hell, which is full of wormes and dragons: (that is Deuels,) who teare in pieces and eate the ſoules of men.

By the fayre woman that went on the wheele, is repreſented the great mercie of God who of his ſingular grace calleth and inuiteth all men to come to him: which bringeth them that ſeeke him to the eaſie fielde of vertues in this life, and afterwardes to the bleſſed ſoyle of euerlaſting life.

Now hearken vnto the interpretation of the seuen tents.

The men whom thou sawest in the first tent-ryding on Peacockes and liuing in continuall strife, notifieth them that liue in perpetuall discorde and enmity, indeuoring to exalt himselfe in honor aboue others. The beastes betoken the euill spirites accustomed to sinne, some one way, and some another. The men in the second tent committing so many follies and vanities, signifie the wicked and vaine worldlings: and the Apes are the dickels, giuers of euill examples & suggesters of euil temptations, whereby they bring men to euerlasting death. The men of the third tent that buik heauie vpon light foundations, represent the couetous men, who are neuer satisfied, but are euer scraping & gathering of

worldly

worldly wealth. The cuoines and Foxes betoken robbers & theeues, that is, the couetous men, who gather riches by hooke & crooke, not regarding how they come by them, which maketh both them & their posteritie fall into the pitt: For not only they that haue gathered goods vniustly together, but also their heires & successors wittingly holding them, without intent of restitution, are guiltie of eternall damnation. By them in the foueth tent, are meant gluttons and drunkardes, that make their bellie their god, & by the swyne the diuels that induce men to wallowe in filthines as swyne in myre. They in the fift tent, tyed fast togither in carnall loue, are those who preferre worldly loue before the fauour of God: Therefore are they girt with venomous serpents,

that is, they are carried away with euil deſires and ſo deepely infected with deadly poyſon, that they burſt therewith, and fall into the pit of hel. God ordayned in paradiſe to ſolemnize the ſtate of matrimonie: not that men thorow fleſhly luſt, ſhould enter therein, but that God ſhould be glorified, prayſed and worſhipped. Neither are the fiue ſenſes therefore beſtowed vpon vs, that we thorow them ſhould ſpeake, ſee, ſmell, heare touch or taſt euery thing indifferently without choyſe or reſtriction, but rather with them to ſupplie the neceſſities of our bodies and ſoules, and to ſerue to the profit and neede of our neighbours for Gods ſake.

By thoſe of the firſt tent are repreſented the ſeekers of worldly wiſedome, who labour night and day to obtayne that in this world which is meere foolyſhneſſe

nesse in the sight of God. They turne their faces to the moone because they seeke and embrace the wisedome of this worlde, which is as vnstedfast, and changeable as the Moone, and they turne their backes to the Sunne of eternal wisedom wherein they ought to exercise them selues by leading a good and vertues life. The wise men of this worlde are like to the Bats and Ouies, that see onely by night, and are blinde by day: for they seeke the things belonging to this world (that is to see by night) but they are blinde and cannot looke vpon the light of the sun, (that is, the grace of G. G. D.) which they should seeke after, and in respect thereof, vtterlie forgoe and despise the blynde wisedome of this darke worlde desiring onely to be partaker of the wisedome of God, which is

the guide to eternall life. Lastly, those who lay a sleepe in the seuenth tent, do signifie them that are buried in spiritu all slothfu'nes; and fallen into the dead sleepe of sinners: out of the which they cannot awake to saue their soules. The first theefe is sinne wherin manie lye and sleepe, and so bereaue themselues of the grace of God. The seconde theefe is Death, that hungreth after men night and day, & at length catcheth them bodie and soule. The thirde is the Diuel, that cunningly stealeth away the souls of men & bringeth them to euerlasting perdition. These be three cruel & mercilesse theeues. Sinne robbeth a man of grace: Death taketh his life away: and the diuel his soule: therfore ought man to eschew spiritual slothfulnes, & not to be so carelesse & negligent

negligẽt while he hath leiſure, eſtiueth here in the time of grace.

The firſt worde Verbum incarnatum, that is, the word incarnated betokeneth the manhood of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he tooke vpon him for our ſakes, thereby to ſaue vs from eternal death. He is made vnto vs a Phiſition, a teacher & a guide, whoſe will, if we diligently exercise, we ſhall obtaine at his handes what wee will. If wee put our truſt in him, wee ſhall not ſuffer ſorrow in ſpirite, but through his helpe conquer all our ghoſtly enemies, and ſo liue in ioy, grace, and ſecuritie.

Then ſpake wiſedome to the Wyde: lady Wyde, thou muſt earnestly behold and looke in the glaſſe, and marke how the holy Prophets foretold of the comming and incarnation

of

of our Lorde, which like as they forckneu, they all desired and wished to see.

Thou must also well marke and ponder how the Archangell Gabriel was sent to the Virgin Marie, how louinglie he greeted her, and foretold her that she should bring forth the king of glory: how wonderfully Christ was conceiued in the Virgins wombe: (her virginitie neuertheless remayneth incorrupted.) Thou must also beholde and looke, that new borne childe stedfastly in the face; the fayrest wight among the sonnes of men, whose father is Lord of heauen, and his mother an vndefiled Virgin: who was borne of his father without a mother, and of his mother without a father. Hee was little and lay in the Crib, and was notwithstanding in greatnesse equall to his father,

accor=

according to his Godhead: hee ſeemed poore and miſerable, and yet the heauens acknowledged him for their Lord, and the Angels prayſed and worſhipped him, and ſang vnto him Glorie to God in the higheſt, on earth peace, and among men goodwil. Make for him a crib and a cradle in thy heart, but firſt cleanſe and purifie it, and expell out of thee a heart all euill thoughts or imaginations that the childe may willingly ſleepe therein. Sing prayſes continually to him, together with the Angels: lift vp thy voyce and thy heart vnto him, for great is the reward that he can giue thee. It is alſo worthy of thy conſideration, how the ſtarre that appeared in the Eaſt betokned the honor and glorie due to that childe and king, vnto whome the three wiſe men offered their

their giftes, of Golde, Frankincenſe, and Myrrhe: Bring thou alſo thine offrings before him, and preſent vnto him Faith, Hope, and Loue, hearken vnto his doctrine, followe his commandements. Forget not the wonderfull workes which he wrought, and ſignes which he ſhewed: How he reſtored the lame and the blind, cured and deliuered the poſſeſſed with diuels and ſundrie diſeaſes, refuſing to heal none that aſked help at his handes with faith, were he neuer ſo ſicke or poore in bodie or ſoule. O remember how ſweete and gentle ſpirited hee was in all his wordes, wayes, and examples, curing not onely the bodies of the ſicke, but alſo the ſouls of ſinners, withdrawing his pitie & mercie from none, but beneuolent and bountifull to all that prayed and ſought vnto

vnto him with a liuely faith. Next thou art to consider his great goodnes towardes his disciples & vs in his last supper, where he gaue his owne bodie for meat, and blood for drinke, to be receiued by faith. What great humilitie he shewed in washing his disciples feete: how he prayed to his heauenly father vpon mount Oliuet, and there did sweated sweet blood: How after that he was taken, bound and cruelly whipped, and tost from post to piller, from Pylate to Herod: How scornfully hee was cloathed and crowned, How vniustly he was arraigned and condemned, and nayled to the ignominious crosse: How hanging vpon the crosse hee most mercifully receiued the repentant theefe into his fauour, & prayed for his enimies. How his keepers offered him

him gall for meate, and vinegar for drinke: how hee receiued his soule after he had suffered that shameful death: how after his resurrection he reuealed him selfe to Marie Magdalen and other women, and afterwards oftentimes to his disciples. How the fortith day after his resurrection he ascended vp to heauen, where hee sitteth at the right hande of his father, from whence hee shall come to iudge the quicke and deade: how vpon Whitsonday hee set the holy Ghost vpon his disciples, by the power whereof they were so comforted and strengthned, that after the receiuing whereof they went out and preached the Gospell euery where with all houldnesse and courage of spirit, before the kings and princes of this worlde, shewing themselues mightie in works signes, and

miracles, and declaring the way of truth and saluation vnto al people inhabiting the earth.

These and the like thinges Ladie Bride must thou attentiuely marke, and beholde in the glasse, Sing prayse and thansgiuing to him that suffered all these thinges for our sakes, and prepare thy selfe against his second comming.

Then spake the Bryde, O when will that happie howre come, for thy words haue made mee long after his comming.

Then anuswered Misedome: Heere must come in three Virgins, Faith, Hope, and Loue. Then sate the bride downe to rest, and passe the time with Misedome, and the rest of the Virgins, who reioyced and sang so loud that their voyces were heard to the Skie After they had rested a while.

Misdom

Miſedome ſtood by and ſpeake ſome few wordes concerning the firſt word, verbum ſacratum (that is, the ſacred word) ſignifieth a ſpiritual remẽbrance of holy baptiſme and the Lords ſupper. Baptiſme is a meane whereby men are waſhed and cleanſed from their ſinnes, and are regenerated in Chriſt in al pureneſſe and newneſſe of life. The Lordes ſupper was inſtituted and giuen vnto vs for a remembrance of him, and the foode of our ſoules.

The ſeuenth and laſt worde, verbum inſpiratum, (that is the word inſpired) betokeneth the ſpiritual grace which God giueth the ſoule. Which grace conſiſteth in theſe foure, Puri-fication, illumination, feruor of loue, and vertuous works.

The firſt Purification, is a cleanſing of the ſoule which god waſheth and purgeth from all ſpots

ſpots of ſinne, and maketh as white as the ſnowe, and as cleere as the Chriſtall.

The ſecond is, Illumination in grace, wherby the ſoule is lighned to know God & it ſelfe. The third is, the feruor of godly loue, & is when the luſts and deſires of the fleſh are put away & man talketh with in his ſpirite the ſweetneſſe of God. The fourth is called vertuous workes, which is, when God beſtoweth ſuch grace vpon a man, whereby he paſſeth ouer his time with profit, expelling all euill thoughts out of his hearte, and giuing himſelfe to the exercile of all good, and abſtinence from all euill works. And this Lady Bride haue I briefely and truely expounded the ſeuē words which thou ſaweſt written in ỳ glaſſe wherein thou muſt exercile thy ſelfe continuallie and alwaies

alwaies keepe thy selfe within the bounds of Faith, Hope and Loue: so shale thou ouercome al sorrow, and be welcome to thy bridegrome, whose companie and grace thou desirest aboue all things in the worlde.

Then Misedome had ended this gratious discourse with the Brid, in came two Virgins who were ye deeply received & courteously entertayned by yeast whereof the Bride tooke great comfort and consolation.

The former drought with her a burning Maxcandle that gaue light to all that were present, and this Virgins name was Faith: The other Virgin bare a scepter in her hand, and her name was Hope. Then Faith began to speake and sayd. Sister Misedome, thou arte worthy of honour and maiesty, thou hast so well and wisely expounded the visions reuea-

led

led in the glaſſe. Yet notwithſtanding know and acknowledge me to be higher then thy ſelfe, and farre aboue thy ſelfe, and farre aboue the reach of thy reaſon, and capacitie of thy vnderſtanding.

For although thou clymeſt high in contemplation of creatures, yet thou canſt not denie but that there be many ſecrets euen in them, whereof thou canſt neither reach the light, nor ſounde the depth. How if thou that art ſo wiſe, taryeſt often in ſearching the ſecrete natures and properties of the creatures, I beare to thine owne iudgement, how much leſſe thou canſt of thy ſelfe comprehend the diuine nature of thy creator, which is God himſelfe) wherefore Lady wiſedome, ſtay thou heere a while, for I will goe before, becauſe I am higher then you, & haue

eyes

eies giuen me to ſee the things which thy wiſedom cannot ſee Then ſpake Wiſedom: I muſt of force acknowledg thy ſpeech to be very right, ſo that thou deſpiſe mee not a together, whoſe help thou canſt not wãt in time of neceſſitie. For thou art not ignorant, what doubts and difficulties are found ſometime in many poynts belongtng to thee, which I make plain and cleere to all the world by diſcreete diſcuſſion and diſputation, whereas otherwiſe without my expoſitions and interpretations, thou wert in daunger to ly vnder & loſe the victorie, for by my ſubtle & profound arguments, I defend thy faithfull followers, & preſerue thee from falling into dangerous errours. Hereunto ſpake the Virgin Hope.

This cõtruerſie riſen between you will I ende: For both of

you

you are nothing without mee, vpon whole ſtrength and for whoſe ſake al your labours are grounded and vndertaken. It is I that allure you, with Hope, and ſet a crowne vpon the head of the winner. It is I that giueth you ſtrength and comfort, and keepeth you from falling into deſperation: whereupon our ſiſter Wiſedom hath truely acknowledged thee ſiſter Faith to be aboue her, becauſe thou and I ſee things inuiſible, although we alſo haue ſome times vſe and neede of her in arguments and diſputations.

Wherefore to ende the controuerſie in few words, ſhee hath need of vs, and we of hir, & ſo let vs agree all together.

After that the Bride was riſen from her reſte, the Virgin Hope eſpyede the Trumpets, and many other im-

implements lying by the bride which the feare of God & spiritual sorrow had brought hither. Shee saw also the Virgin Iustice, which bare the sworde and the crowne, wherupon Hope turned her speech to the Bride and saide. Ladie Bride, cast of all heauines and sorrow, and be glad, for I will stand by to comfort thee after which words, Hope sate her downe by the Bride; and tooke from her the Trumpets, the bason and the sworde, and laid them downe vnder the brides feet: then she tooke the Crown and set it on the brides heade, which being done by Hope, the bride sodainely conceiued great comfort and gladnesse of spirit. When the three Virgins God lie feare, Spirituall sorrow, and Iustice, saw what hope had done they saide: Thou hast alwaie the weapons wherewith the

Bride

Bride was defended: look wel what thou doeſt, leaſt as oftentimes it falleth out, the ſinne of hautineſſe and preſumption ſlip in with thee, and cauſe thy fall and deſtruction. Hope anſwered and ſaide louing ſiſters, hopewell and bee not afraide, for I am therefore called Hope, becauſe I giue much, and take nothing away. I deminiſh the vnneceſſarie and needleſſe cares of good men, and deliuer them from gerill of deſperation. I comfort ſuch as mourne in ſpirite, and them that fall I rayſe agayne. I make the harts of men leap and reioyce at my words, and giue them ſtrength againſt all aduerſities and tentations. For I am not giuen alone of God without other graces: for you three come euer before me, and poſſeſſe the mind of godly men with holſome conſiderations,

with whome our Sisters true confession and repentance conuerte: And after all you come I last of all, to safe the soule encombred with feares, sorrowes and griefes, that hee fal not into desperation. Wherfore my aide and assistance is most necessary for attayning of the ioy & glory to come, whereunto men aspire sooner by Hope then by Feare. But in case any man exalt himself too high, presuming too much vpon any helpe, that is the fault of him that presumeth, and not mine vpon whome hee presumeth. Insomuch that both you and I are all requisite to practise and exercise men in vertuous life. Feare keepeth from hauti-nesse and ouer much presumption: Hope from pusillanimity and desperation: Faith and Wisedome rested well contented & satisfied with the speech

of

of the Virgin Hope and ſayde: It is true indeede, that not onely Hope, but alſo feare muſt concurre to the working of the ſoules health: For the feare of God keepeth the gates narrowly that pride and preſumption ſlip not in at the wicket, with Hope, who commeth accompanied onely with comfort. This Feare being ioyned with iuſtice and wiſedome breede a diligent care in the ſoule, ſhewing that there is no ſtrtie in this life, wherein a man may ſtande or fall: and hereupon ſeemeth to aryſe a little ſtrife between Feare and Hope, which notwithſtanding are both the eſpeciall gifts of God proceeding from his grace After all this Wiſedome ſpake to other Virgins and ſayde. what doe men attend for and tarry all this while? If true loue were once come, ſhe would

bring the Lorde with her, and make preparation for the great feaſt. Therefore let the bride call for ſome of the virgins, & ſend the with embaſſage vnto her. Then ſpake the bride ſighing. Alas whome or whither ſhall I ſend? Wiſedome anſwered her and ſaide: In heauen dwelleth True loue, ſend embaſſadours thither of earneſt prayers: let Faith and Hope accompanie them, and I will guide and direct them in the way. So the embaſſadours were ſent, and Faith and Hope accompanied them. But true loue forknew well her ſiſters meſſage, and therefore went before to meete her. Earneſt and feruent prayer declared vnto Loue the meſſage of the women, Wiſedom directed and gouernd, Prayer, Faith & Hope did their parte and office diligently, in ſomuch that Loue longed to ſee the

Bride

Bride. Then spake Loue to Prayer, I vnderstand and conceiue thy message well, & thou didst wisely to come to mee, without whom thou canst doe nothing well, therefore I will forthwith go with thee to visit the Bride: So Loue made her ready for the voyage, & went accompanied with many noble virgins whose names are these. The first Puritie, who wore a ring on her finger, and on her head a crowne of Lilies: The second Humilitie, who brought with her a coffer full of pretious ornaments and iewels: and these two wayted in the parler of loue, and were neuer from her. After them followed two other virgins, Temperance and Discretion, and after them two other Mercie and voluntarie pouertie. Mercie who giueth much for a little: Loue had in her left hand a

weake hollow and broken reed like as pouertie on earth is weake, ſicke and broken. But therein lyeth her hope that ſhe ſhall leaue the reede, and take vp the ſepter in her hand, that is, after temporall pouertie eternall wealth, and after earthly weakues, heauenly ſtrength. The next to thē were ſtrength and Patience, who behaued themſelues valiantly in the ſpirituall fight. After him followed Obedience, which ſerueth in all things, and Vnity that breedeth common concord Laſt of all followed good Manner and perſeuerance. All this honorable traine accompanied True loue the Queene of vertūes, vntill ſhee came to the bride, who receiued vpon loues comming extraordinary ioye & conſolation. For the dart of loue ſo wounded her hart, that ſhe cryed a loud: ô Loue, bring him hither to me whome I ſeeke

seeke and desire: for except he come quickly I die. With that the Bride layde her downe to rest. Then spake Loue to the Bride: Haue confidence in me, for I am able to bring him to thee. It was I that tooke him out of his fathers heart, and brought him hither in earth in neede and miserie. It was I that pierced thy heart, and made thee seeke after him, so can I pierce his also, & make him come downe to thee. After these words Loue departed sodainely towards heauen, and tooke in her companie Faith, Hope and Wisedome. When they were come to the firmament, Wisedome stayed vpon a sodayne, and could not get higher, but was forced to attende till the returne of the three sisters. But Faith, Hope and Loue went forward with ioy to the throne of heauen. There Faith

looked about to viewe heauenly ſecrets, with the brightneſſe whereof her eyes were almoſt dazled, had not Hope ſtood by and holden her. Then ſtoode Loue vp, and went before both the ſiſters, towards the king of glorie: when ſhe was approched ſomewhat neere vnto him, ſhee bent her bow and ſhot the king thorow the heart, from which wound fell downe ſeuen drops of blood vpon the bride: by which we are to vnderſtand the ſeuen gifts of ℌ holy Ghoſt, whoſe grace droppeth into the ſoules of ſuch as loue him, for whoſoeuer can wounde the king with loue, vpon them ſhal flow not drops but ſtreams of the grace of God. After this Loue ſpake vnto the king and ſaide: my Lord and king, I acknowledge and confeſſe before thy maieſtie, that onely thou haſt ſanctified and ſaued mee, and

and all theſe with mee who ſeeke the ſame that I do. I am in thee and thou in me, for which cauſe I am the boulder to propoſe the meſſage of the Bride vnto thee, hoping that thou wilt not denie her louing and tender requeſt, which is nothing elſe but that thy excellent maieſtie would vouchſafe to come and viſit and comfort her with thy grace & preſence. After the king had heard the meſſage expounded by Loue, vnto which he anſwered nothing at firſt, expecting what the other Miſters had to ſay: Hope ſtept forth (before the king and ſayde:) Lorde thou knoweſt what the ſpirit ſayeth to mee in manie Scriptures, that thou deceaueſt no man but whoſoeuer putteth his hope and truſt in thee, thou graunteſt him the deſires of his heart: In confidence whereof

was ſent hither by the Bride, and am come before thee hoping that thou wilt come to her, and that quickly. Then began Loue to ſpeake againe to the king and ſaide, Lord thou knoweſt how I loue thee, and howe eaſelie I ouercome and turne as I liſt with my prayers, for I am mightie, & whatſoeuer I will, that muſt be. I am in thee, and thou in mee: he that is in thee is in me: and he that hath mee hath thee, & no man hath thee without me: therefore the bride hath made and ſent her ſupplication to thee by me, and I beſeech thee of that tender loue which thou beareſt me, to hearken vnto her ſuite, and fulfil her requeſt. To theſe embaſſages anſwered the king in few words. Loue Faith and Loue, and my grace is alwaies with you, and therefore for your ſakes I am rea-

dy

dy to ſatiſfie the requeſt of her that ſent you. The embaſſadours remayned exceedingly glad at the kings anſwere. Then Faith carried a light in hir hand and *Hope* went playing on inſtruments of muſicke before the king, & Loue lead him by the arme: and Wiſedome was occupyed all this while in preparing and adorning the bride chamber. When the bride vnderſtoode of the kings comming, ſhee reioyſed not a little. Then Faith tooke the light in her hande, & brought the bride to the king and ſaide vnto her: See and beholde her by this light, in whom heretofore thou diddeſt beleeue though vnſeene, three perſons and one God. Then ſpake Wiſedome to the Bride: This is hee of whom I interpreted vnto thee in the graſſe, whole diuine nature I declared vnto thee in

all

al creatures. Then ſpake Hope this is he whom I ſoreſhewed in whome I bad thee put thy truſt: Laſt of al ſpake Loue and ſaide: Behold this is thy beloued bridegrome with whome thou muſt ioyfully paſſe the time of the high feaſt ſo long by thee deſired. When the bride was in preſence of the King, hee ſaluted her louingly and ſaide: My peace and grace bee with thee alwaies, I am thy maker and comforter: I haue redeemed and ſaued thee with the price of my blood, for I only am hee that giueth life to ſoule and bodie The Bride preſently anſwered the King & ſaide: Lord I beleeue all that thou haſt ſaide, and therefore with all my minde, with all my heart, and with al my ſoule I giue thee praiſe and thanks for thy ſweete graces beſtowed vpon mee: by the helpe wherof

I

I hope neuer to depart from thee. For thy face is fayre, and thy countenance fauorable & gratious in my ſight, onely to talke with thee, is pleaſanter vnto me then the ioyes of playſing inſtruments & thy wordes ſweeter then the hony and hony combe. Then ſpake the king my fayre & welbeloued, I will bring thee to my Pallace, and there thou ſhalt eate pleaſant fruits, and whatſoeuer thou ſhalt aſke of mee, I ſhall not denie it thee. Then began the Bride with her virgins to reioyce in the ſumptuous feaſt prepared for her, with prayſe & thankſgiuing, ſo long vntil ſhe layde her downe and reſted: In which reſt, I will nowe leaue her, and will briefely ſpeake of the fiue ſteps or degrees of conſideration, which conſiſteth in the loue of God.

The firſt degree is called feruor or zeale of loue: which

is

is, when the heart of a man is inwardly ſo kindled with loue, that ſhee conceiueth great ſorrow for his ſinnes, and giueth himſelfe to vertuous exercile, and ſo approcheth to god, from which he receaued the heate of loue.

The ſeconde degree is the moyſture or liquore of loue, which is, when out of the heat of loue diſtilleth an hot liquor and teares, for as the thunder and ſtormes from the heate of the ſunne, ſo from the heate of loue proceedeth ſpirituall and harty ſorrow, which putteth the euill ſpirit to flight, & therbut doe ſpring teares which bring forth the fruits of vertu in due ſeaſon, in the garden of the ſoule.

The third degree is called Penetration of loue, that is, when the mynde is ſo inwardly illuminated, that it ſeeth ſecret

cret and hidden things in the contemplation whereof it alwaies occupyeth it ſelfe.

The fourth degree is called the boyling of loue: which is ſeene then when a man is ſo rauiſhed with the feruor of loue that hee exerciſed it ſometimes in wordes to him ſelfe, being ouercome, and as it were aſtonſhed with the vehemencie of his loue, that for verie heat boyleth within his heart, and ſweth ouer.

For euen as we ſee on the fiere that ſome pots ſeeth, and other for heat ſweetheth ouer: ſo ſome zealous men do inwardly boyle ouer with the heate of loue, which they put in practiſe ſometime vnawares to their owne thoughts and imaginations: all which proceedeth from the power of the grace giuen them by GOD, and not from their owne might.

The

The firſt degree is the loue of Exaltation, which is, when a man in tranquilitie of ſpirit is wrapt, and being bereaued of the vſe of his exteriour ſenſes, and annoynted with the ſweete loue of God, ſeeth with ſpirituall eyes, heauenly and ſecret thinges, as it hapned to Paul who was rapt in the ſpirit vp to the third heauen, where he ſaw wonderful thinges that are vnſpeakeable by the tong, nor comprehenſible by the vnderſtanding of mortall men, ſo long as the ſoule heere in this life is laden with the heauie burden of the body. Wee muſt therfore vnderſtand ỹ ſtrength of this loue to bee ſuch that it cõquereth our three enimies, the fleſh, the world and the diuel, yea and ouercõmeth God himſelfe. This ſame loue is a cunning and expert Philition, furniſhed with ſalues againſt ſores

ſoꝛes and medicines, app'ya-
ble to all ghoſtly diſeaſes: her
ſalue are compounde of the
herbes of ſinnes, which ſhee
poundeth in the moꝛtoꝛ of the
heart, togeither with griefe e
repeatance, and mingleth mer-
cie therewith, e ſeetheth them
all togeither in the fier of Hope
and grace. Theſe ſalues haue
vertue to vnſpos the ſoule, and
yeeldeth ſuch a ſweete and
ſtrong ſmelling ſauoure, that
all the heart is filled therewith
and becommeth of the diuels
temple, the houſe of God · this
was the ſalue which Marie
Magdalen bꝛought with her to
our Sauiour, whereby ſhe ob-
tayned foꝛgiuenes of her ſins,
of whoſe loue our Sauiour
gaue teſtimonie and ſayd, that
many ſinnes were forgiuen her,
becauſe ſhe loued much: with
whome all her teares did not
meritte ſo much as the leaſt
dꝛop

drop of her loue. And therefore our Sauiour ſaide, not becauſe ſhe wept, but becauſe ſhe loued much. There is another of her ſalues, noleſſe pretious than the firſt, made of the goodneſſe of God, beſtowed daylie vpon vs. This ſalue cureth the diſeaſe of ingratitude, and is called grace and thankſgiuing, with this ſalue the ſame Mary Magdalen annoynted the head of our Sauiour, the ſweete ſent whereof, filled the whole houſe. Loue hath yet a third ſalue not inferiour to any of the other two, which is the bringing of Chriſtians in remembrance, what they are to ſuffer of the Iewes, Heathens and Turkes, but eſpecially of the falſe brethren that are Chriſtians in mind and not indeed. This ſalue brought the three women to the Sepulcher of Chriſt, by whom wee may vn-

der

derſtand Faith, Hope and Loue, who are moſt ſkilfull in making and alſo in applying this ſalue to the ſaluation of godlie men.

Now let vs returne againe to the bride, who we left in ſpirituall reſt with the bridegrome. In the meane time while ſhee tooke her reſt with the King, in came two Virgins called Feare of God, and Iuſtice and ſpake. Lady Bride now it is time for thee to ſtand vp, for thou haſt taken a long & ſufficient reſt. The Bride being awaked vpon the ſodaine, began to ſpeake in complayning wiſe, O my moſt beloued virgins, what haue you done vnto me? why haue you awaked me out of my ſweete reſt? The Virgins anſwered and ſaide, Lady Bride, we haue not done this in deſpight or diſpleaſure, but becauſe it is time to pre-

pare

pare thy ſelfe for the wedding. for the bridegrome will ſet open the doore of his kingdome for thee to enter in. Then anſwered the Bride and ſaid vnto Loue. I am glad therefore that it is ſo well fallen out, for had you ſuffered me in my reſt a little longer, I had betaken my ſelfe another way. So ſhee turned her ſelfe to the bridegrome and ſaide, O my welbeloued, what wilt thou do with me? and with that ſhee embraced him, and held him faſt betweene her armes. Then anſwered the King: My moſt deere and beloued friend, becauſe thou tookeſt mee with al thy heart, & deſiredſt nothing more then to dwell with mee, therefore wil I alſo dwel with thee: But I muſt depart from thee for a time, and thou ſhalt remayne heere on earth vntill I call for thee. Then anſwe-

red

red the Bride and ſaide: O my Lord: now that thou doſt departe from mee, how ſhal I liue heere in this vale of miſeries, in thy abſence without thee, or thy conſolation? The king anſwered and ſaide, bee in peace my beloued, and feare not, for my grace ſhall not depart from thee, notwithſtanding I will not alwaies be preſent in perſon with thee, that thou thereby maiſt be brought to remembrance of thy ſelfe what thou art without mee: but my comming ſhal comfort thee. In the meane time put thy hope and whole truſt in mee, for I am thy king and thy God, I haue ſaide the worde, and I will not fayle thee. I will returne againe vnto thee with comfort and ioy, and that ſhortlie. After the king had ſpoken theſe words, hee departed, and the bride lamented and wept bit-

bitterlie: Then came the Vir-
gins to comfort her, and ſaide
vnto her: Ladie bride we mar-
uell not to ſee thee ſo ful of an-
guiſh and heauineſſe, for wee
doubt not this thy ſpirituall
grace proceedeth from ꝯ grace
of God, and will in the ende
bring foorth ioy & conſolation:
haue confidence in the woords
of the king, hee hath promiſed
to returne againe & that quick-
lie: whatſoeuer he hath ſaide,
that is done, (for he cannot lie)
haue patience therfore a little,
and call vpon him, that he may
ſee thy affections and loue to-
wards him, hee will viſit thee
when it ſhall bee beſt for thee.
The bride reioyſed at theſe
comfortable woords of the vir-
gins: then ſpake Wiſedome and
ſaid, Ladie bride, the king vn-
doubtedly will come, therefore
thou muſt alwaies be ready a-
gainſt his returne, that whe-
ther

ther hee come early or late, by
dayes or by night, he may finde
thee prouided, & ſo thou maieſt
depart in the ende of thy life
out of this worlde in ioy and
ſecuritie. Theſe words of Wiſe
dom ſeemed to haue ſome ſow-
er mingled with the ſweete,
and cauſed diſcord and diuerſi-
tie of paſſions in the bride, for
as ſhee tooke ioye of the king-
dom of the bridegroome, ſo not-
withſtanding ſhe had ſome care
and affection in minde concer-
ning her departure from hence
in her laſt ende, therefore Loue
and Hope ſpake vnto the bride
and bade: Ladie bride, behaue
thy ſelfe ſtoutly, and put thy
confidence in him, in whoſe
power all things conſiſt, who
can and will direct thy wayes
from the beginning to the end
who hath promiſed to receiue
thee into his heauenly king-
dome, and will performe it
when

when it ſhall ſeeme beſt vnto Wiſedome that doth knowe what thou haſt neede before thou doſt aſke, and what is good for thee, better than thy ſelfe. The Bride anſwered & ſaid: I thanke both Wiſedom & thee my loue for your louing counſell which I meane to follow according to the grace which is giuen mee by him whoſe departure is cauſe of all my ſorrow: I will alwaies feare and loue him. I will put all my hope, truſt and confidence in him, my Lord and king, and commit my ſelf wholie vnto him to doe and diſpoſe of mee whatſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe him So was the bride in ioy & ſorrow, gladneſſe and griefe for manie dayes. And after a certaine time, the king came to the bride with a ioyfull companie of ſinging Angels and ſaide: Come my choſen and beloued,

I

I haue put my throne in thee & I desire thy beauty. The bride being stroken with great ioy at the words of the bridegroome, answered and said: O Lord my God, like as the very heart desireth after the water brookes, so doth my thirstie soule long after thee the water of life, O my beloued, my hart is molten within mee with loue of thee: I was almost dead with sorrow and heauinesse of heart since thy departure: and howbeit thou hast reuiued me since thou beganst to speake vnto mee, & inuited me to thy Pallace, the chamber and thy bed, where I will lie with thee vnder the Lilies and Roses, and tarie with thee from henceforth for euermore. The king interrupted the Bride and said againe. Come hither my beloued vnto mee, from that vnstedfast and dangerous place wherein now thou art, where the corrupti-

on of mãhood fighteth againſt thee & dayly prouoketh thee to ſinne: where the falſe and wicked world deceiueth thee, and the common enemy of al mankinde hunteth after thee day and night to kill thee: Come therefore into the kingdome prepared for thee, where is no feare nor care, nor aduerſitie. The bride anſwered and ſaid: O my ſoule giue thanks to the almightie, and prayſe the God of heauen and earth, together with the Angels and all other creatures that ſing prayſe vnto him, and declare his glorie, that hath ſo louingly inuited ther to the high feaſt, and called ther to an euerlaſting kingdome. The Lord Jeſus alſo inuited her, and ſpake vnto her ſaying. Come my beloued and choſen, to the honour and glorie prouided for thee. Come for the winter is paſt, and the pleaſant Sommer is come to thee, that

ſhall

ſhall bring thee ioy and gladnes without ende. Then ſpake the Bride and ſaid, I am glad and reioyce in God, who calleth & inuiteth mee ſo friendlie to come vnto him. Come hither all you that feare God, ſee and behold what wonderful things he hath done for my ſoule, and he hath defended me with his right hand, that I ſhould not fall into ſinne: hee hath of his meere grace elected and made me a Queene, and receiued me into his glorious kingdome: I giue the prayſe all to GOD who hath ſaued mee, & thanks alſo to all ſuch as counſayled to take the way of euerlaſting life, whether I nowe take my iourney and leaue this miſerable world from the aduerſities and tribulations wherof I am now deliuered for euermore.

After that the bride had ſpoken this ſhee tooke her voyage

t owards heauen, at whoſe co-
ming the Angels reioyced and
ſong Prayſe bee to God in the
higheſt, on earth peace, and in
men good will: O how happie
are they that dwel in the houſe
of the Lorde, for they ſhall giue
laud and thanks to God for e-
uermore: So was the bride re-
ceiued with ioy and triumph
into the throne of almighty
God, where ſhee was crowned
with the crowne of glorie in
euerlaſting life.

Of the worthineſſe of the bodies of the bleſſed in euerlaſting life.

NOw ſince wee haue ſpoken
all this while of the ſpirit-
tual

tuall bride whoſe end was to
enioy the bliſſe of eternall life:
we will ſpeake ſomewhat alſo
of that glorie which both ſhee
and all the faithfull people of
God ſhall receiue in their bodie
after the laſt reſurrection in e-
ternall life: where they ſhal be
endowed with theſe ſeuen e-
uerlaſtingly: beutie, ſtrength, li-
bertie, pleaſure, health, and im-
mortalitie. Their beautie ſhall
ſeuen times ſurpaſſe the beau-
tie of the Sunne, for God ſhall
alter the body of their baſenes
& make it like the body of his
brightenelle. They ſhall be of
ſuch ſubtilitie and excellencie,
as they ſhal be able in the twin
cling of an eye to goe from hea-
uen to earth: and returne to
heauen againe, as the Angels
now doe, like whom they ſhall
be. Their ſtrength ſhalll be ſo
exceeding that if they woulde,
they might ouerthrow al with

one of their feete. They ſhalbee able to compaſſe all that lyeth againſt them without ſtop or ſtay: like as our bleſſed Sauiour went out of the graue being ſhut, and came into his diſciples, the doores being locked They ſhall haue infinite pleaſure without paine, ſweetneſſe without bitterneſſe, and ioye without ſorrow: for they ſhalbe ſet ouer kingdomes with authoritie, and alwayes heare the melodious harmonie of angels cõtinually giuing thanks and prayſe to God, their health ſhalbe perpetuall without intermiſſion. for they ſhall ſuffer no ſickeneſſe or weakeneſs, neither can any payne or griefe light vpon them, Laſtly they ſhall put of all mortall corruption, and put on immortalitie, for death is afraide of them & fleeth from them, and eternall life is alwayes with them, & can-

cannot depart from them: for though all creatures ſtood by againſt them, it ſhould no more hurt them then a ſwerde of winde, or the ſhadow of the Sunne.

Of the worthineſſe of the ſoule in euerlaſting life.

The ſoules of the elect are not without graces and dignities, for they haue theſe ſeuen giuen them by God that choſe them to dwell with him in his kingdom, Wiſedom, loue, vnitie, power, glorie, ſecuritie and ioy. By their wiſdome which floweth from the ouerflowing fountayne of the wiſdome of God, they know all thinges

preſent and to come: they can tell al the names of men in heuen and hell, and their good & bad workes, nothing is hidden from them becauſe they behold all things in the ſunne of iuſtyce. Their mutuall loue towards one another is implicable, for they dwell in GOD which is loue, and God in thē euer without ende. Their vnitie is like the vnitie of the eyes which euer ſtryue and looke the ſame way, for whatſoeuer one bleſſed ſoule, that will all the reſt, and what they will God will: for what God will, that will they, neither doth any of them deſire more then he hath receiued by the grace of God. Looke as the foote deſireth not to be the eye, nor the hand to be the eare, nor mouth to be the nose. For looke whatſoeuer the one of them hath not in it ſelfe, that it hath in another

chaſtitie, and the moore for that the diuell daylie aſſayleth the chaſt, and doth all his endeuour to cauſe them to fall into vncleanlineſſe.

My ſworde ſmote Pharao in like manner, when hee with all his people and his whole armie, both men, his Chariots and all that he had in his trayn was drowned in the red Sea, purſuing the children of Iſrael againſt the will of God, who brought his people dry-foote through the ſame ſea, making a way for them quite through the waues.

Wherefore Ladie Wyde, neuer thinke or vndertake any thing againſt the will of the Lord thy GOD, nor doe any thing contrary to his ordinances, leaſt hee in the like manner punish thy offence and rebellious intent. But if thou doe walke in his waies and

follow his commaundements, thou shalt ouercome all thine enemies, whome the Lord wil destroy for thee.

My sworde hath also diuers times smittē the poore people of Israel which the Lorde brought through the Wildernesse, and fedde with heauenly Manna, For they through their rebellious and murmuring obstinacie, changed Gods incredible mercie into hate, and made him of their louing God and Lorde, their enemie, because they woulde not trust to him and beleeue him as they shoulde haue done: and so neglect his commandements, wherewith they grieuously incurred his anger, and being diuers times moued with great wrath, smot them with the sworde of his vengeance. & so punished their stubbernenesse. Therefore lady Bride proue not vnthankefull

vnto

vnto the Lorde, but parting aſide all ſtubbernesse and ſtiffneckednesse, ſuffer him to worke with thee according to his holy will and pleasure, and murmure not against thy Lorde GOD, but endeuour with all thy might to doe what he commandeth thee, and so shalt thou escape manie ſuch blowes which my ſworde must laie on them that displeaſe and offende the Lorde: For I am to execute iuſtice in the behalfe of the Lorde. And I carrie both a ſworde and a crowne, If you will auoide the punishment of one, you muſt not commit the offences for the chaſtiſement whereof it is borne, and ſo ſhall you deſerue to bee rewarded with the other, the crowne wherewith your bridegrome ſhall crowne you when he carryeth you vnto his heauenly Courte. For this is the ma-

nature of Juſtice to yeeld vnto euerie one what hee deſerueth, and to take from euerie man that whereof hee is vnworthy.

And the Lord dealeth in ſtie with men, as beſeemeth his iuſtice, howbeit hee forbeareth ſome, and puniſheth others: for no man can conceiue his iudgements, who ſheweth mercy to whome he pleaſeth, and withdraweth his mercy from whom he thinketh good: and yet is he moſt iuſt: for that no man can ſay, I haue deſerued to enioye grace and mercie: and therefore ſome are dealt with all accor-ding to Gods mercy, others according to his iuſtice: Therefore Ladie bride ought you to leaue all thinges into the hands of God, and ſuffer him wholy to diſpoſe of you, dedicating your ſelfe wholy to his mercie: and thinke whatſoeuer he doth, or howſoeuer hee dealeth

with

with you, that is accoꝛding to his iuſtice, and that he as a good father knoweth what is profitable vnto his children, and as a good Phiſition who beſt knoweth what is moſte conuenient foꝛ his patiente: And therefoꝛe conſidering that the ſame which ſometimes are feared, falleth out in the ende to our great good and comfoꝛt both of body and ſoule, we cannot doe better then giue vp al wholie our ſelues into the handes of the Loꝛd GOD, and whatſoeuer happeneth vnto vs in this life, to praiſe the Loꝛde foꝛ it, if we will not be deceiued,

All this conſidered, it is neceſſarie Ladie bride you ſhould weigh and marke the ten commandements of the Loꝛde, to the ende that knowing his holie will, you may euer obſerue his preceptes.

The

The firſt is: Thou ſhalt haue none other Gods but mee.

ii: Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelfe any grauen Image, nor the likeneſſe of any thing that is in heauen aboue, or in earth beneath, or in the water vnder the earth: thou ſhalt not bowe downe to worſhip them, For I thy Lord thy God am a ielous God, and viſit the ſinnes of the fathers vpon the children, vnto the third and fourth generation of them that hate mee, & ſhewe mercie vnto thouſands in them that loue mee, and keepe my commandements.

iii. Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lorde thy God in vayne: for the Lorde will not hold him guiltleſſe that taketh his name in vaine.

iiii. Remember that thou keepe holy the Sabboth daye. Sixe dayes ſhalt thou labour & doe all thou haſt to doe, but the ſeuenth

ſeuenth day is the Sabboth of the Lorde thy God. In it thou ſhalt doe no manner of worke, thou, and thy ſonne, and thy daughter, thy manſeruant and thy maide ſeruant, thy cattel and the ſtranger that is within thy gates: For in ſixe dayes the Lorde made heauen & earth, the ſea, and all that in them is, and reſted the ſeuenth daye: wherefore the Lorde bleſſed the ſeuenth day and hallowed it.

v. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy dayes may bee long in the land which the lorde thy God giueth thee.

vi. Thou ſhalt do no murther

vii. Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.

viii. Thou ſhalt not ſteale.

ix. Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witnes againſt thy neighbour.

x. Thou ſhalt not couet thy neighbours houſe, thou ſhalt not couet thy neighbours wife

noꝛ his ſeruant noꝛ his maide, noꝛ his oxe, noꝛ his aſſe noꝛ any thing that is his.

Foꝛ whoſoeuer breaketh the leaſt of theſe commandements, and dyeth obſtinat elie without repentance, ſhall neuer ſee the face of the Lorde, but is cut off by the ſwoꝛde of his iuſtice from all mercie.

After that iuſtice had ſpoken vnto the Bride in that maner, came in three other gentle women, the firſt named Repentance carrying a baſen in her hande with water in it.

The ſeconde is called Confeſſion, and carried in her hande a white towell.

The third was called Amendment, and carried with her a boxe with precious ſalue made of frankenſence myrre and oyle.

Re-

another, as in it ſelfe, & there-
fore is it, that the ioy of each
one is ioy of all, and the glorie
of one, the glorie of all. Their
power is ſo mightie & greate
without meaſure, that if they
could make a new heauen and
a new earth, their ioyes ſo far
ſurpaſſe the ioy of this worlde,
that neither the tong can ex-
preſſe, nor the heart conceiue
howe great it is, and their po-
er nothing is able to reſiſt or
withſtande, becauſe that God
hath giuen power to all ſuch
as beleeue in him, to be called
his children. They are glori-
fied not of men but of GOD
himſelfe, as his obedient chil-
dren that haue done his will,
and kept his commandements.
They are in all ioy, ſafetie and
ſecuritie without all feare, need
or aduerſitie. The diuell hath
no more power ouer them,
for he is ſubiect vnto them:

the

the ſight of the ſpirite and the
fleſh is ceaſed in them, and the
falſe and wicked world cannot
deceaue them any more. They
haue an endleſſe ioy in the ho-
ly Trinitie, which they behold
for euer and euer: they haue ioy
in them ſelues for the glorie &
worthineſſe which they haue
receiued in ſoule and body: they
haue ioye in other creatures
which giue them light and do
them ſeruice as the Sunne,
the Moone, & ſtarrs. The vn-
ſpeakeableneſs of this ioy, made
S. Barnard ſay, O my ſoule awake
looke vp, and behold the beautie
of euerlaſting ſaluation, the re-
ward of the godly, the ioy of the
elect, the riches of grace, the plea
ſure, and the princely pallace, not
built by the hands of men, but by
art and wiſedome of God, and
deſpiſe the gifts of temporall
things: againe he ſayeth, I con-
ſidered and marked the thinges

pre-

prepared for the ſoule in the kingdome of heauen, and there vpon ſpeaketh thus: ô my ſoule prayſe the Lord in all thy daies, and forget not all his goodneſſe, caſt of thoſe things that drawe thee from him, and deſire & loue the treaſurs which hee keepeth for thee, that thou looſe not wherfore he hath made, and that thou bee not a ſcorne to thy enimies. S. Auguſtin alſo ſayth: ô well-ſpring of wiſedome, when ſhal we come to thee? ô thou incomprehenſible light, then ſhall wee not ſee thee any more in a glaſſe of ſimilitude, but face to face, wherin all our deſires are fulfilled, for there is nothing therein to be marked, but onely that thou art the chiefeſt good, and the reward of the godlie, and the crowne of glorie vpon their heads, for it is onelie thou that preſerueſt them within and without, by the peace that paſſeth all vnderſtanding.

There

Ther ſhal they ſee him the vncrea ted & true light, which lightneth the eyes of Angels, & maketh the ſaints reioyce, for God is both the gift & the giuer, the rewarde and rewarder, the crowne and the crowner. There is true and eter nall life, wherof a thouſand years are but a day, and a day as a thou ſand yeares. There is pleaſure without payne, reſt without la bour, light without darkeneſſe life without death, and all good without all euill. There the yong waxeth not old, beuty fadeth not zeale and loue decayeth not, ther is life without end.

How the diuel caſteth his bride into eternal damnation.

When ſ houre of death drew neere, then came the diuel to

to his Bride the vngodly ſoule and attendeth to take her away: ſhe would fayne hide her ſelfe, but cannot for grimme death driueth her forwarde, & the diuell followeth at her heeles wherſoeuer ſhe fleeth. Then beginneth ſhe to cry and ſay. Alas and woe to me, for ſorrow and death haue compaſſed me, death ſtarteth me in the buſh, and the hellish hounds wayt for me to teare my bodie, and take my ſoule from mee with that all the hounds of hell are coupled together, and beſet her rounde about, and ſpake vnto her with a ſtern countenance thus. Where is now thy pride and highneſſe? where is all thy leaping, daunceing & playinge? where are thy riches, thy honor and thy filthy luſt? where are thy coſtly ornaments and pretious Jewels? where is thy proude Pace and moſte ſtately

ſtately gate? what is now be-
come of thy mirth, thy feaſts,
bankets and ſolities wherein
thou didſt conſume thy dayes?
To all this the poore ſoule had
nothing to anſwer but Oh and
woe, in neceſſitie and miſerie.
Then come in the ougly and il
ſpirits, and take the ſoule be-
twixt them, ſpeaking with an
horrible voyce: This is the vn-
godly bride, that would not put
her truſt in God, nor leaue to
ſinne, wherein ſhe tooke all her
delight and pleaſure, whereof
now ſhee would repent, but all
too late: when ſhe ſeeth the pri-
ſon of hell, then ſhe deſpayreth
vtterly, and maligneth God
that made her: ſhee curſeth the
paſſion of our ſauiour in whome
ſhe did not beleeue: ſhee curſeth
father and mother for bring-
ing her into this worlde, ſhee
curſeth all the creatures in
heauen and earth Laſtlie ſhee

cur

curſeth her ſelfe body and ſoule with ſuch outcry, complaynt & miſerie as cannot be expreſſed: for the damned ſoule is ſhut vp in cloſe priſon, whers ſhe is to continue without fauour or comfort in euerlaſting fyre. There is a horrible ſtinch of pitch and brimſtone: there is nothing but darkenes hunger and thirſt, paine griefe ſhame miſerie, lamentation and deſperation. There is ſtaring of eyes, and wringing of handes, there is weeping & gnaſhing of teeth: they wiſh to dye but cannot, for their paynes and torments are without ende, their beds are wormes, and their couering Toads, their meate is hot as fire, and their drinke as boyling water, and they ſit vpon ſharpe pinnes. Their daylie exercile is nothing but payne and miſerie, & the remembrance of their ſins cut=

cutteth their conſciences like a ſaw, notwithſtanding all this profiteth thē nothing, they are hated of al creatures in heauen & earth, becauſe they condemned the grace of God being offered vnto them, the Angels & Saints of heauen are their enemies, from fellowſhip they are by ſinne and vnbeleeue eternally excluded: Wherefore they whine and howle without cauſe, for the length and continuance of their great paynes whereof they ſhal neuer know any ende.

FINIS.

Imprinted at London by *Iohn Woolfe*. 1597.

THE TREASVRE OF the Soule.

Wherin we are taught how in dying to Sin, we may attayne to the perfect loue of God, & our neighbour, and conſequently vnto true bleſſednes and Saluation.

Many yeares ſince written in the Spaniſh tonge, & and now newly tranſlated into Engliſh:

By A. P.

1. Tim. 1.

The end of the commandementes is loue: ſpringing from a clean hart, a good conſcience, & an vnfained faith.

Gal. 5.

Thoſe that appertaine to Chriſt, haue crucified their fleſh, with all the euill deſires & concupiſcences thereof.

LONDON
Printed by Iohn Wolfe.
1596.